Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XVIII, Issue No. 21 | **MONDAY** JANUARY 21, 2008 | www.saipantribune.com | 50¢

POLL RESULTS

Do you think it is time that Saipan enacted an anti-animal cruelty statute?

Yes-**55**

No-**21**

No opinion-**4**

Sunday January 20, 2008

INSIDE

McCain Gains

Sen. John McCain won a hard-fought South Carolina primary Saturday night, avenging a bitter personal defeat in a bastion of conservatism and gaining ground in an unpredictable race for the Republican presidential nomination.

Nation...Page 14

Poe Grave Visitor

Undeterred by controversy, a mysterious visitor paid his annual tribute at the grave of Edgar Allan Poe early Saturday, placing three red roses and a half-filled bottle of cognac before stealing away into the darkness.

Life & Style...Page 20

Fitial in RP looking at viability of geothermal energy in CNMI. **PAGE 2**

Man in domestic fight gets probation sentence. **PAGE 2**

150 join motorcade vs federalization

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@siapantribune.com
REPORTER

Local citizens from both ends of the political spectrum got together on Sunday in protest of the proposed federalization of CNMI immigration.

Some 150 government officials, businessmen, and community members participated in a two-hour motorcade around the island, honking their horns and greeted by residents they passed

See 150 JOIN on Page 4

AP

Democratic presidential hopeful, Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., reacts with her husband, former President Bill Clinton, to supporters after being declared winner of the Nevada Caucus in Las Vegas Saturday, Jan. 19, 2008.

Analysis: New tone in Democratic race

By JIM KUHNHENN
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

AMERICA VOTES

WASHINGTON (AP)—Hillary Rodham Clinton laid down a winning hand in Nevada. So did Barack Obama.

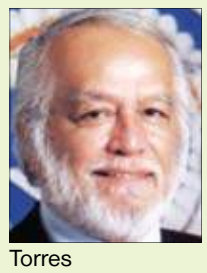
After a brawling presidential contest in the state, Clinton heads into the next battleground of South Carolina with an-

See ANALYSIS on Page 4

Stanley to reintroduce political status bill

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The most senior member of the House of Representatives is bent on legislation to revisit the Commonwealth's political relationship with the United States.



Torres

Rep. Stanley T. Torres said he will reintroduce his bill that seeks to form a Second Marianas Political Status Commission.

The bill passed the 15th House last month, but it died in the Senate.

"People are not taking it seriously," Torres said. "But I will try to get it passed in the 16th Legislature. Maybe this time, they will take a serious look at it."

Torres, who participated in yesterday's motorcade rally against the proposed federalization of CNMI immigration, said he believed there was room

See STANLEY on Page 4

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

TaoTao Tano citizen group president Gregorio Cruz and member Marvin Pangelinan hold the group's banner during a rally to show their opposition to legislation federalizing CNMI immigration at the Garapan Fishing Base, across the Kristo Rai Church on Beach Road yesterday. ***See photo gallery on Page 6***

Fitial working out budget with new legislative leaders

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has begun talks with the new legislative leaders to try to get his budget proposal approved.

Press secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr. said the governor met with House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios and Senate President Pete P. Reyes on Friday.

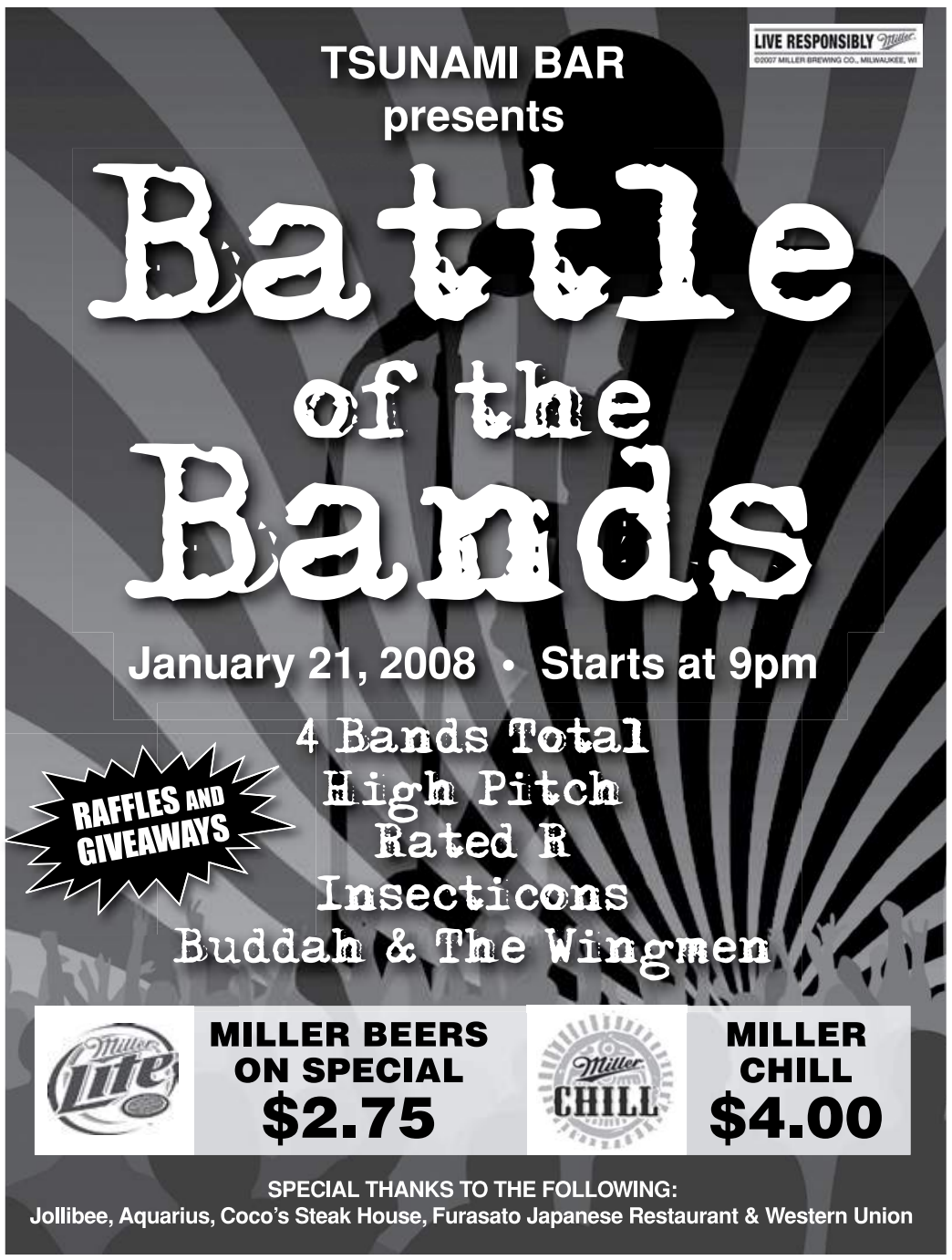
Finance Secretary Eloy Inos and the governor's financial consultant, Antonio Muna, were also present at the budget meeting.

"They are trying to negotiate in good faith and come up with the most realistic budget for this government under the cir-

See FITIAL on Page 4

PREPAID
SPECIAL
i415 Only
$49 with FREE $42.50 airtime value and Sim Card
i855 Only
$149 with FREE $97.50 airtime value and Sim Card
20% off on accessories
iCONNECT
Saipan - Guam Office:
888-8888
Tinian/Rota: 898-4259
www.iconnectsaipan.com
Free prepaid credits must be loaded into the new sim card upon purchase. Conditions apply.

Fashion Avenue
PLASTIC BAG
Sale
One plastic bag for $40
Concept: Put as many items as you can without breaking the bag
Your friend can split or share the amount
Clearance Sale on US fabrics $3-$5 per yard
STORE HOURS:
Mon-Sat 10am-9pm
Sunday 12pm-6pm
Tel.: 235-0099
THIS IS NOT A CLOSE OUT SALE, NEW ARRIVALS ON THE FIRST WEEK OF FEBRUARY.



Local

Fitial in RP looking at viability of geothermal energy in CNMI

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial is currently in the Philippines with his special assistant for alternative energy, researching on geothermal power.

Fitial

The governor, who just came from a three-day courtesy visit to Federated States of Micronesia, left for the Philippines over the weekend. He is expected back in the Commonwealth on Wednesday.

Press secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr. said the governor is traveling with James Quick, a former scientist with the U.S. Geological Survey who is studying the possibility of using the volcanic islands in the north of Saipan to produce geothermal energy.

"The governor really believes in alternative energy. He is exploring the possibility of tapping into the Northern Islands for that," Reyes said yesterday.

Quick worked for 25 years at the USGS and is a former program coordinator of its volcano hazards program.

He is now the associate vice president for research and dean of graduate studies at Southern Methodist University in Texas, and Fitial's special assistant for alternative energy.

His geothermal plant study is focused on the northern uninhabited volcanic islands of Alamagan and Pagan.

Pagan is located about 320 km north of Saipan and forced its residents to evacuate when its volcano erupted in 1981.

Alamagan is about 270 km north of Saipan. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

Man in domestic fight gets probation sentence

A man accused of beating his wife has entered a guilty plea to the charge of disturbing the peace.

Superior Court Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona accepted the guilty plea of Alfred Cabrera Santos Jr. and sentenced him to six months in jail, all suspended.

Following a plea agreement, Manglona placed the 43-year-old Santos on probation for six months.

The judge required the defendant to write a sincere letter of apology to his wife and pay $175 in fine and probation and court assessment fees.

Manglona said Santos should perform 20 hours of community work service and shall not consume or possess any alcoholic beverages during the probationary period.

A review hearing to determine whether the defendant complies with the terms and conditions of the sentence was set for April 16, 2008.

The judge reminded Santos that failure to appear at the review hearing will result in the issuance of a bench warrant.

In August 2007, the Attorney General's Office charged Santos with assault and battery, and disturbing the peace.

The defendant signed a plea agreement with the government represented by assistant attorney general Timothy M. Connor.

Santos pleaded guilty to disturbing the peace (a crime involving domestic violence). The remaining charge was dismissed.

According to the factual basis of the agreement, on Jan. 7, 2007, the defendant and his spouse engaged in an argument during which "he provoked a breach of the peace with a loud and threatening voice." ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

SOLEMN PRAYER JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Dignitaries kneel down as they offer their prayers during the Inaugural Mass of the 16th Northern Mariana Islands Commonwealth Legislature and the 10th Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council held last Jan. 13 at the Mt. Carmel Cathedral in Chalan Kanoa.

NMC application deadline extended

The Northern Marianas College has extended it's application deadline to this coming Friday, Jan. 25.

If you are interested in furthering your education whether full time, part time, or 3/4 time, please call NMC Admissions and Records Office for assistance.

And if you apply from Tuesday to Friday, Jan. 22-25, 8am-4pm, the application is waived as well as the English and Math Placement test.

The FAFSA Application Federal Pell grant is also still ongoing and the deadline is Feb. 1, 2008.

For more Information, call the Northern Marianas College at 234-549. Extensions are:

Office of Admissions and Records, 1524, 1528, 1539,1523, Fax# 235-4967; Financial Aid Office 1527, 1525, 1526, Fax# 235-4967; Student Center (ASNMC), 1251, 1252, and 1253. ***(NMC)***

Rep. Sablan leads Unity March organizers, supporters in cleanup for MLK Jr. memory

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Tina Sablan led some organizers and supporters of the Dec. 7 Unity March in a cleanup at the American Memorial Park yesterday to honor Martin Luther King Jr. 's memory.

After Park Ranger Nancy Kelchner conducted a briefing on safety measures and the designated area for cleanup, Sablan and more than 40 people, including children, started picking up trash and pulling out unwanted grass at 9am.

Some volunteers also trimmed the plants while others swept some debris in the vicinity of the Memorial Park's museum.

After more than two hours of cleanup, the volunteers collected more than two truckloads of trash, debris, and grass.

"This is as very simple commemoration for Martin Luther King Jr. Day, honoring the memory of Martin Luther King Jr.," Sablan told *Saipan Tribune.*

Sablan said the organizers of the Unity March decided that one way of contributing to the community and also to honor Martin Luther King Jr.'s memory was to clean up American Memorial Park area.

"We're picking up trash and just making the area nice for tomorrow's festivities which will be the main event," she said.

The lawmaker said she is also encouraging everyone to participate in the Martin Luther King Jr. event for tomorrow, Monday.

"I understand there is a speech competition, there is a forum on civil right and the relevant of Martin Luther King's worth to the CNMI," she added.

Human Dignity president Jerry Custodio said the Core Group of the pro-federalization Unity March organized the cleanup in preparation for Martin Luther King Jr.'s Day celebration at the American Memorial Park.

Custodio also disclosed that they are interested in adopting the national park by conducting at least a once a month beautification program in the area.

He said they are planning to water-blast the benches at the amphitheater to make them look clean.

Among those present at the cleanup were Dekada Movement president Bonifacio Sagana, educators Ron Hodges and Jaime Vergara, activists Malou Berueco, Ronnie Doca, and Cory Borja. Bowler Riza Hensley, who is now based in Guam, also volunteered her time along with businessman Ed Propst, who dropped by to contribute bottled water.

Custodio said they are also inviting all guest workers in the CNMI to join attorney Joe Hill's group in the Martin Luther King Jr. march at the American Memorial Park today, Monday, at 3pm.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ
Unity Movement members Ronnie Doca, Lolit Velasco and Waldan Beri participate in cleaning up parts of the American Memorial Park yesterday morning.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE
Representative Tina Sablan in a group photo with organizers and supporters of the Dec. 7 Unity March during their cleanup yesterday at the American Memorial Park to honor Martin Luther King Jr.'s memory.

DISCONNECTION NOTICE

PTI would like to remind its customers that payments not received by close of business on January 22nd, will result in temporary suspension of all telephone services after 6:00 p.m. on that day. To prevent temporary suspension, customers must pay their bills on or before January 22nd.

THIS WILL BE THE ONLY NOTIFICATION PTI CUSTOMERS WILL RECEIVE*.

Per an earlier announcement, PTI is no longer mailing out past due notices as of 11/01/06.

* You have the right to dispute this notice. You must state your claim in person or in writing no later than January 22nd. You must pay any amount not in dispute to avoid disconnection. Payment denotes acceptance of all charges.

If you have questions regarding billing or service please call Customer Service at **682-4PTI (4784)** or visit our Customer Service Representatives at our Chalan Lau-Lau Office.

PTI Your connection to the world

Introducing
Bankohana Bonus Rate Savings Plus

Now, there's a whole new way for Bankohana customers to take their savings to an even higher altitude. Introducing Bankohana Bonus Rate Savings Plus. Each month, simply deposit a minimum of $100 and make no withdrawals, and you'll not only earn a regular interest rate, you'll get our highest bonus interest rate. Plus, sign up now and you'll receive a FREE[1] $20 DFS Galleria Gift Card.

Not a Bankohana customer? Then ask about our other Bonus Rate Savings accounts and ways to earn a DFS Galleria Gift Card. Better hurry to a Bank of Hawaii branch today, this offer flies away 2/17/08.[2]

Bankohana Bonus Rate Savings Plus

Balance Amount	Regular Variable Rate APY[2]	Bonus* Variable Rate APY[2]	Combined* Variable Rate APY[2]
$100,000 and Over	1.95%	2.05%	4.00%
$25,000 to $99,999	1.45%	2.05%	3.50%
$10,000 to $24,999	0.25%	2.05%	2.30%
Less than $10,000	0.05%	2.05%	2.10%

* The above bonus and combined rates are contingent upon making a minimum deposit of $100 with no withdrawals from your Bankohana Bonus Rate Savings Plus account during the month. Fees may reduce earnings. Your Bankohana Bonus Rate Savings Plus account must be linked to Bankohana Checking account.

Bank of Hawaii

[1] $5,000 minimum opening deposit and balance required for new Bankohana Bonus Rate Savings Plus accounts opened by February 17, 2008. Funds to open account may not be from an existing Bank of Hawaii account. Some restrictions apply. You will receive a $20 DFS Galleria Gift Card upon account opening. Limit one $20 DFS Galleria Gift Card per account regardless of the number of accountholders. Limit one per customer. Not available for existing accounts. Good while supplies last. [2] Current Annual Percentage Yields accurate as of 1/2/08 and subject to change without notice. Interest rates and APYs may change after the account is opened. Fees may reduce earnings. Some restrictions apply.
boh.com ©2007 Bank of Hawaii Member FDIC

Temaru to push French Polynesia sovereignty

PAPEÉTE, Tahiti (Tahitipresse)—French Polynesia President Oscar Temaru announced Tuesday that he plans to bring up the subject of sovereignty during French President Nicolas Sarkozy's scheduled visit to Tahiti in April.

Temaru did not specify whether he planned to discuss such a subject as Tahiti's new president for the fourth time since 2004, or simply as a politician following a two-round general election on January 27 and February 10.

However, in a lead page one story in Wednesday's French language daily newspaper La Dépêche de Tahiti, Temaru said in a full-page interview, "Even if I'm no longer president, I have received assurances to be able to meet with President Sarkozy when he comes in April. Of course I will speak to him about our wish for independence. I think he is sufficiently open for that."

When La Dépêche asked him what he planned to tell the French president, Temaru replied, "That in the (French) republic's constitution there is an article that provides for the status of associated States. Why not apply it, do it! France is here, it should not leave, but it must trust us."

The comparison is often made with Tahiti's Polynesian cousins in the nearby Cook Islands, which are a former overseas colony than are now an associated State with New Zealand.

The constitutional article Temaru referred to allows France to "enter into agreements with States wishing to join it in developing their civilizations." However, this has been interpreted to mean in French Polynesia's case that Tahiti must first become independent before it can become an associated state with France.

Temaru spoke Tuesday during a press conference as he presented his Union for Democracy (UPLD) political campaign of a "change in style" for the election of the 57 French Polynesia Assembly seats. He is the first major political leader to present his political campaign to the media.

He presented the UPLD's campaign poster, which presents a large photo of himself dressed in the black suit he wore when he met President Sarkozy for the first time in Paris last October. A smiling Temaru is also wearing a thick lei of tiare Tahiti flowers.

The poster reflects what Temaru described as his wish for a decidedly different political campaign with an "inclusive" message. That was an apparent reference to the message in big letters across the top of the poster, "I believe in us." At the bottom of the poster in slightly smaller text is his full name, "Oscar Manutahi Temaru."

ANALYSIS

From Page 1

other popular vote victory. But Obama, whose Jan. 3 Iowa victory recedes with time, walked away with one more Nevada delegate than Clinton.

The split decision shifts the fight to the South, where Obama is relying on black voters, who make up more than half of the South Carolina Democratic electorate, to give him a winning edge. Most polls have him leading Clinton in the state. But Clinton has won over many influential black leaders and had led in the state before Obama's Iowa victory established him as a strong contender.

By eking out 13 delegates to Clinton's 12, Obama was able to salvage a foothold in the race and keep Clinton from claiming a full dose of momentum.

The Nevada results indicated Clinton's support among women remained strong. Significantly, nearly two-thirds of Hispanic caucus-goers said they supported her, despite Obama's backing from a heavily Hispanic casino workers union.

Six out of 10 of these attending the state's caucuses were women and nearly half of them backed her, according to a survey of caucus attendees. One in three women supported Obama going into the caucuses.

She and Obama split men about evenly. More than half of white voters entering the caucuses said they supported Clinton; one in three said they backed Obama. The white vote made up two-thirds of the overall vote.

Black voters heavily favored Obama, with eight out of ten voting for him. But they made up fewer than one in five voters.

That won't be the case in South Carolina. By Friday night, at a Martin Luther King Jr. banquet in Nevada, Obama already was making his case for black voters not to forsake him.

"Sometimes we've got that thing in our heads that says we cannot do something," he said as his largely black audience shouted "Yes!" in response. "We have been told for so long it's not possible. We've got to wait for somebody else to tell us it's possible before we decide it's possible. But let me tell you, I'm here to say it's possible. We're doing it right now. Don't tell me I can't do something!"

That kind of exhortation is likely to continue throughout the week, boosted by Monday's observation of the Martin Luther King holiday. In a visit rich with meaning, Obama will speak at King's Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta on Sunday.

Scott Huffmon, a political scientist at Winthrop University in Rock Hill, S.C., predicted that black voters who have made a decision to support Obama will stick with him.

But, he added, "Obama has to really take South Carolina to reassert his place in the order."

The Nevada results were a serious setback for John Edwards. At least one poll had placed him in a virtual tie with Clinton and Obama earlier in the week. But without money for advertising and with not enough union support, he mustered less than 4 percent in the caucuses.

"It begs the question of how much longer he can stay in," Huffmon said.

The Clinton camp declared the Nevada vote all the more important because Obama had received the support of the Culinary Workers Union, the largest union in the state.

Obama may have sensed the outcome. He headed home to Chicago while the caucuses were under way and planned no public appearances. His campaign, however, trumpeted the delegate victory and noted that Obama had closed a 25-point lead that Clinton had enjoyed in the polls in November.

The week leading to the Nevada caucuses was one of the most contentious in the Democratic contest so far. In the final hours, both campaigns claimed dirty politics marred the voting. Obama, Clinton and Edwards head to South Carolina with no sign the race will turn genteel in the South.

Clinton backers went to court in an unsuccessful effort to block special precinct caucuses in Nevada seen as beneficial to Obama. Clinton herself then charged that Obama wasn't steadfast enough against a Nevada nuclear waste site.

Obama backers ran a Spanish language ad calling Clinton "shameless" and said the New York senator "does not respect our people."

Those were tough words in a contest that was supposed to let the Democratic Party embrace Latino voters, not drive a wedge through them.

Obama, urged by Clinton and Edwards to denounce the ad, did not.

Now comes South Carolina, no stranger itself to fight night politics.

Editor's Note: Jim Kuhnhenn has covered politics in Washington for more than 14 years.

FITIAL

From Page 1

cumstances," Reyes said.

He noted that the administration has strong reservations about the budget bill passed by the 15th House of Representatives. The bill died in the Senate.

"There is a lack of resources for the budget that the previous House passed. The governor is trying to work that out with the new Legislature," Reyes said.

The House-passed budget appropriated $168.771 million in resources to government operations. This excludes $3.03 million that will go to the Department of Public Lands, whose revenues are separate from the general fund.

The budget prescribed an 18-percent retirement contribution rate for the central government, Public School System, and Northern Marianas College. The 36.7-percent rate determined by the actuarial study will apply to all other agencies.

The governor says the government can only pay 11 percent.

His other request, the suspension of holiday pay, was left out of the appropriation bill.

Furthermore, the measure proposed huge cuts against the budget of the Executive Branch, while setting the Legislature's budget at $9 million, which is about twice the amount recommended by the administration.

The government projects total resources of $174.398 million in FY2008. This includes traditional revenues, as well as resources outside of the General Fund, such as $5.171 million in Compact Impact funding and $3.5 million from previously earmarked funds deemed available for reprogramming.

But only $168.771 million is available for appropriation for government activities. Of the difference, $3.030 million will go to the Department of Public Lands, $1.7 million to tobacco control programs, $2 million to solid waste management systems, and $450,000 to the deportation fund. Bond payments account for the $7.118 million balance.

The FY2008 budget is now over three months overdue. The fiscal year began Oct. 1, 2007 and will run through Sept. 30, 2008.

STANLEY

From Page 1

for improvement in the U.S.-CNMI political relationship.

"The people [of the CNMI] desire to reexamine whether continuing in a 'commonwealth' relationship with the United States pursuant to the terms of the Covenant is in their best interest, or whether some other political status will better enable them to fulfill their aspirations of full and meaningful self-government," states a portion of Torres' bill.

Under the proposed legislation, a commission will be created to revisit the provisions of the Covenant and the U.S. government's actions in interpreting and implementing the Covenant. The commission will also examine alternative political and economic status options for the Northern Marianas.

After completing its study, the commission will make recommendations to the CNMI people for adoption in a plebiscite with regard to a desirable political status.

The commission will be composed of 11 voting members, as well as the Senate president and the House speaker.

Recognized by the United Nations as a trust territory since 1947, the Northern Marianas became a commonwealth after signing a covenant with the U.S. government in January 1978.

On Dec. 22, 1990, U.N. Security Council voted to dissolve the Trusteeship Agreement, and accordingly, the former trust territory status of the Northern Marianas. This gave the CNMI rights to fully self-govern in internal matters and to modify its political status through democratic means.

150 JOIN

From Page 1

along the way.

After the motorcade, the group gathered at the Garapan Fishing Base for a barbecue lunch.

"I was expecting more people to come, but it's all right," said Gregorio Cruz, president of the Taotao Tano citizen group, which led the event. "The turnout today is better than in any previous meeting we have had. I just wanted people to get together, set aside the political differences, and show they are united against federalization."

Some of the prominent people at the motorcade were Attorney General Matthew T. Gregory, Lands and Natural Resources Secretary Ignacio Dela Cruz, the governor's senior policy adviser Ray Mafnas, Board of Education member Marylou Ada, Hotel Association of Northern Mariana Islands chairwoman Lynn Knight, and businessman and *Saipan Tribune* columnist Bruce Bateman.

Rep. Stanley T. Torres of the Republican Party, Rep. Raymond Palacios of the Covenant Party, and former Rep. Cinta Kaipat were also present.

"The diversity of the people here, as well as the support we saw in the villages, only shows that there is wide opposition to federalization," said press secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr.

For his part, Rep. Torres said that yesterday's event was "long overdue. And I feel good about the number of people who came out to participate."

He added that the CNMI should not only oppose immigration federalization, but also consider renegotiating its political relationship with the United States. ***(See related story)***

An unsigned statement against federalization was handed out to the media during the gathering at the fishing base.

The statement, purportedly drafted by an unorganized group of local citizens, said the authors "do not oppose any national group from seeking U.S. citizenship. However, we oppose the manner in which the federal government seeks to grant permanent residency and citizenship to aliens/foreign nationals working in the CNMI using out of the ordinary established immigration procedures and channels at the expense of the people of the CNMI by compromising the provisions of self-government found in the Covenant."

The people behind the statement also accused the federal government of using "erroneous, biased, and manufactured facts" to convince Congress to pass legislation federalizing CNMI immigration and to exempt foreign nationals in the Commonwealth from long-established U.S. immigration procedures for obtaining U.S. permanent residency and eventual citizenship.

"The people of the CNMI gave of their blood, land and absolute sovereignty to become U.S. citizens. U.S. citizenship is a privilege that must be earned. U.S. citizenship cannot be bought, sold, exchanged, or handed out at large at the expense of the social, political and economic stability of Americans living in the CNMI without equal representation in the U.S. Congress," the statement added.

The U.S. House of Representatives has passed the bill extending immigration law and create a federally run guest-worker program in the Commonwealth.

The bill would also give the CNMI a delegate in the House with limited voting powers. Currently, all U.S. possessions except the CNMI have a delegate in Congress.

But the bill does not include a previously proposed provision that would grant permanent status to long-time foreign workers in the CNMI.

The bill is now part of an omnibus measure, which is expected to pass the U.S. Senate in early February 2008. If the Senate passes S. 2483 without amendments, the bill may go straight to President Bush for signature. But if there are amendments, the bill will have to return to the House for concurrence.

Labor sanctions garment manufacturer for untimely filing of renewal, appeal

The Department of Labor has sanctioned a garment manufacturer for its untimely filing of appeal on the denial of its renewal application for an ironer.

Labor Administrative Hearing Officer Jerry Cody also determined that Kyung Seung Saipan Inc. also untimely filed the 2006 renewal application for the ironer, Shaofa Su.

Kyung Seung Saipan, which took over the management of Rifu Apparel Corp., was sanctioned and ordered to pay $480 to the CNMI Treasury.

Cody reversed the Labor director's decision that denied Kyung Seung's 2006 renewal application for Su.

Cody

The hearing officer said since the time period for the 2006 renewal application has passed and a 2007 renewal application is currently pending, the Labor Division should process the 2007 application, provided that the employer pays the sanction.

According to Labor records, Su worked as an ironer for employer Rifu Apparel Corp. under a nonresident work permit that expired on July 7, 2006.

Kyung Seung Saipan filed a renewal application for Mr. Su on Aug. 22, 2006—46 days late.

On Nov. 28, 2006, the Labor Division denied the application on the grounds that it was untimely filed.

Kyung Seung waited more than eight months to file an appeal of the denial.

In his administrative order, Cody said that, at the hearing, he first addressed whether or not to dismiss the appeal based on its untimely filing.

After deciding to allow the appeal to proceed, Cody said he took testimony from the employer's local manager, Juanita Angel, regarding the employer's reasons for the late filing of the renewal application.

After hearing the testimony, Cody said, the Labor Division recommended that the hearing officer allow the appeal to proceed, reverse the denial and sanction the employer for its conduct.

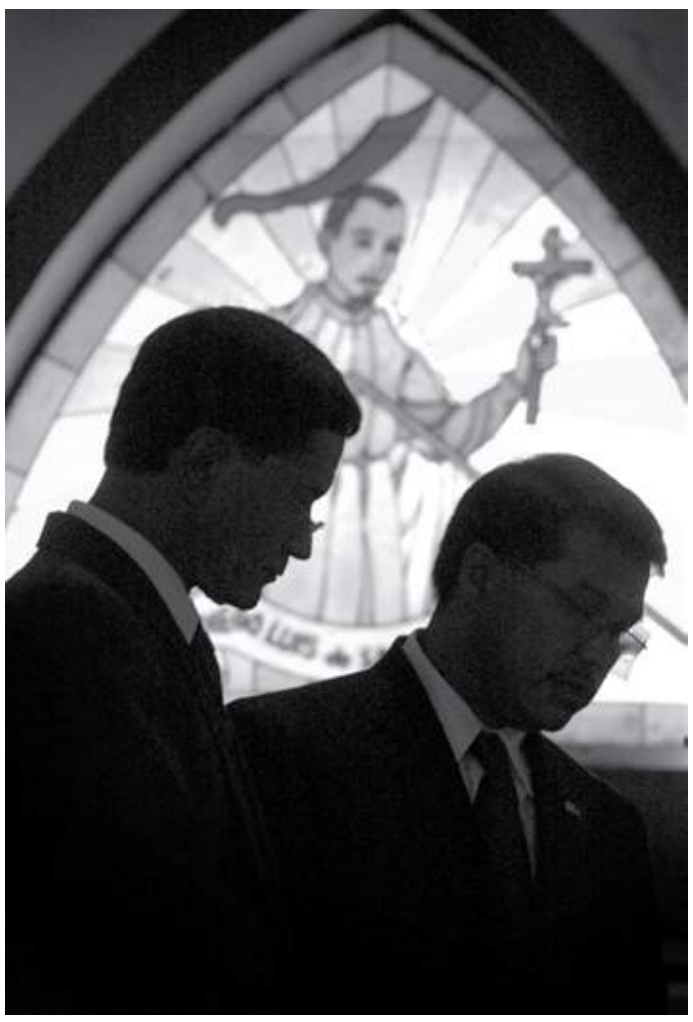
Under these facts, the hearing officer said he could dismiss the appeal, affirm the denial and give transfer relief to the worker.

However, he said, Kyung Seung and Su asked to be allowed to preserve this employment relationship and agreed to pay monetary sanctions for their conduct.

"This employer testified at hearing that after Kyung Seung Saipan Inc. took over management at Rifu Apparel Corp., the new management neglected to realize that Su's renewal application was due," Cody said.

Cody said as soon as the employer discovered its mistake, it took steps to rectify the situation.

At the hearing, he noted, the employer accepted responsibility for its mistake and promised to be more diligent in monitoring the expiration dates of its employees' permits. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

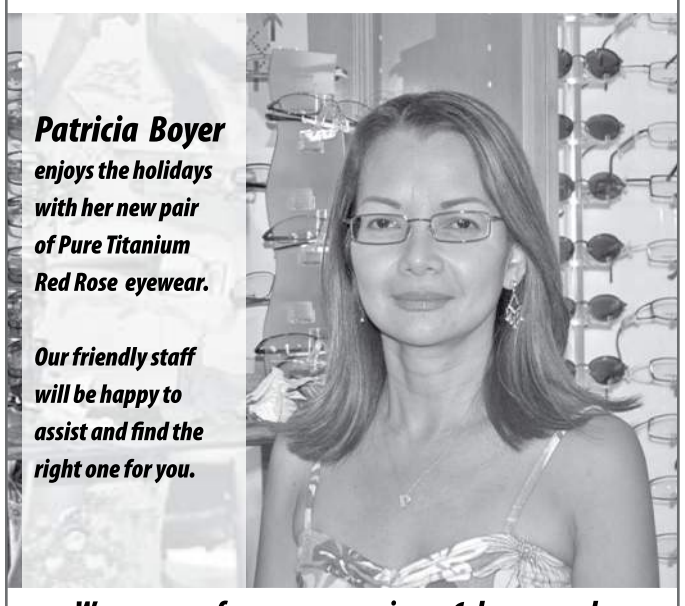


INAUGURAL MASS JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Felix T. Mendiola and Diego T. Benavente facilitate the general intercessions during the Inaugural Mass of the 16th Northern Mariana Islands Commonwealth Legislature and the 10th Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council held last Jan. 13 at the Mt. Carmel Cathedral in Chalan Kanoa.

Hardt Eye Clinic

Experience our Personal touch to Eye Care



Patricia Boyer *enjoys the holidays with her new pair of Pure Titanium Red Rose eyewear.*

Our friendly staff will be happy to assist and find the right one for you.

We are open for your convenience 6 days a week.

Monday to Friday from 8:00am to 5:00pm except Wednesdays from 10:00am to 7:00pm and Saturdays from 9:00am to 1:00pm.

We accept most insurance plans including Aetna, Medicaid, Medicare, Staywell, Calvo's, Netcare, Takecare. Tricare Overseas, and Blue Cross (Federal Govt. employees)

Please call us now at 235-2030

We are located at beach road next to Megabyte.

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

NORTHERN MARIANAS COLLEGE NMC 1981

Wakai Nekko No Kai Friendship Golf Tournament

Wednesday, January 23, 2008
Show Time 6:00am – Shotgun Start 7:00am
Coral Ocean Point – Double Peoria Format
Tournament Fee - $75.00

Tournament Prizes 1st to 10th Places

1st Place	:	$400 + Trophy
2nd Place	:	$300 + Trophy
3rd Place	:	$200 + Trophy
4th Place	:	$100
5th–10th Place	:	Consolation

Hole In One Hole No. 12 2008 Toyota Yaris

Closest to Pin Contest Hole No. 7 Special Prize

Hole In One Hole No. 14 $5,000.00 Cash

Awards Banquet will immediately follow at the Coral Ocean Point Hotel - Pool Side
Awesome & Fabulous Door Prizes

Please submit entry forms at the
Mayor's Office Afetna Square, San Antonio attention Mr. Tony Benavente Ph: 234-6208 Fax: 234-1190 or
MVA Office, San Jose attention Mr. Martin Duenas Ph: 664-3200 Fax: 664-3237.
Make checks payable to Marianas Visitor Authority (Memo: WNNK).

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ FAX: _____ E-MAIL: _____

HANDICAP: _____

Scenes from anti-federalization motorcade

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Children wave to the crowd during the island-wide motorcade.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Cars honk their horns while parading on Beach Road.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

A local kid waves while riding at the back of a pickup truck during the motorcade.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

TaoTao Tano citizen group president Gregorio Cruz enters his car to lead the motorcade.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

A member waves the CNMI flag during the motorcade.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

TaoTao Tano citizen group banner is seen while the motorcade starts on Garapan Fishing Base.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Johnny S. Reyes display the TaoTao Tano citizen group banner.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

TaoTao Tano citizen group members wave their banner during the motorcade.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

TaoTao Tano citizen group president Gregorio Cruz and members gather for a group photo during the luncheon.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Rep. Raymond D. Palacios shakes hands with TaoTao Tano citizen group president Gregorio Cruz.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Board of Education
Public School System
P. O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

Invitation For Bid
IFB 08-012

The CNMI Public School System (PSS) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for **Security Services for all Public School Campuses and PSS Properties located in the CNMI.** Detailed information on the Scope of Work is available at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office located on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950.

All bids must be placed in a sealed envelope face marked "IFB 08-012" containing one (1) original and three (3) copies and shall be submitted to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office no later than February 4, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. Responsibility determination documents shall be placed in separate envelope marked "IFB 08-012, CONFIDENTIAL - Responsibility determination" (1-original and 1-copy). Any bid after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstance.

Technical questions must be in writing and addressed to Mr. Carl de la Cruz, Acting Procurement & Supply Officer via fax # (670) 664-3791. Alternatively, questions may be emailed to the following address: **delacruzc@pss.cnmi.mp**. Questions shall be submitted no later than ten (10) calendar days prior to the deadline for submission of bids.

General inquiries to this announcement may be directed to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office at telephone numbers 237-3062 / 3035.

The Public School System reserves the right to award single or multiple awards or to reject any or all bids, in whole or in part, if to do so is in the best interest of the Public School System.

All bids shall become the property of the Public School System.

/S/ Dr. David M. Borja, D.B.A.
Commissioner of Education

/S/ Carl F. de la Cruz, M.B.A.
Acting P&S Officer

Island Snapshots

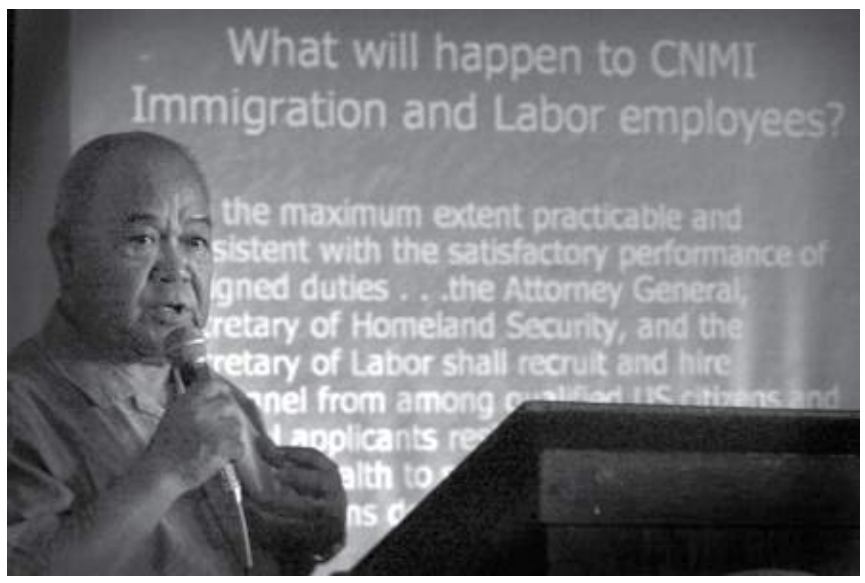
TRADITIONAL DANCE
Members of the Inatuas Cultural Dancers render a traditional dance number during Thursday night's Garapan Street Market at the Paseo de Marianas.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

MAKING A POINT
CNMI Public School System acting human resources director Ramon Diaz, Jr., gestures during his presentation at the Principal's & Program Managers meeting at the Pacific Islands Club Thursday.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

CHILD SEAT CHECK

Police officer II Wally F. Villagomez, POI Glenn Rabago, and POI Ned Norita inspect the child safety seats during the Department of Public Safety's Buckle Up Children Consulting Child Safety Seat on the parking lot of Price Costco Saturday morning. Certified child passenger safety technicians also educated parents and caregivers about proper installation and use of child safety seats and booster seats during the free inspection.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

PETE A. SPEAKS
Washington Rep. Pete A. Tenorio delivers his speech on federalization and its impact on the CNMI during the Society for Human Resource Management-CNMI Chapter's first general membership meeting at the Pacific Islands Club Charley's Cabaret Thursday.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



REEF UPDATE
Coastal Resources Management Marine Biologist John Starmer delivers his presentation on the current status of the CNMI reef during the 2008 International Year of the Coral Reef proclamation at the Hyatt Regency Saipan Sandcastle in Garapan Friday morning.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

SNAKE EXHIBIT
Curious students look to Division of Fish and Wildlife herpetologist and brown tree snake program coordinator Nate B. Hawley while feeding the brown tree snake with a small rat during the 2008 International Year of the Coral Reef proclamation at the Hyatt Regency Saipan Sandcastle in Garapan Friday morning.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

INVITATION FOR BID

NMHC ITB 08-003

This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD funds.

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, through the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, hereby give notice that NMHC is soliciting sealed bids for the **CONSTRUCTION OF SUSUPE SPORTS COMPLEX GRANDSTAND**, in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Interested individuals or firms may pick up a copy of the Project Package beginning Monday, January 14, 2008, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of one hundred dollars ($100.00) is required for each set. Payment shall be by cash, check, money order or cashier's check (payable to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation).

Bidders are advised that this project is subject to compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act and the labor standard provisions for wage rate determination of the Commonwealth. All labor on the project shall be paid no less than the minimum wage rate of $3.55 per hour which took effect on July 25, 2007 as established by Federal law including subsequent increases of $.50 per hour every six (6) months until the hourly rate equals that of the Federal Minimum Wage of $7.50 per hour.

A **mandatory pre-bid conference** will be held at **10:00 a.m.** on **Wednesday, January 23, 2008**, at the proposed project site located near the Ada Gym in Susupe, Saipan, and all interested bidders will be given the opportunity to walk through the proposed site, familiarize themselves with the required work and ask questions regarding the project. Attendance at this conference and site visit are considered essential to the bidders' understanding of the project elements and a company that does not have a representative in attendance at the pre-bid conference will be considered as a non-responsive bidder. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing to Mr. Joshua T. Sasamoto, Corporate Director of the NMHC, P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, or faxed to (670) 322-3547 no later than 4:30 p.m. local time, January 24, 2008.

Bid must be submitted in an original and three (3) copies to the office of the Director, Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950, not later than **10:00 a.m., local time, Wednesday, January 30, 2008**. Any bid received after the above date and time will not be accepted under any circumstances, unless submitted by a bidder outside the Commonwealth and must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than local time, January 30, 2008 **AND** must be received no later than February 8, 2008. In order to receive this additional time, bidders outside the Commonwealth must notify the Director, Procurement and Supply in writing not later than 10:00 a.m., January 30, 2008, of their intention to submit a bid. Notice can be by e-mail to procurement@pticom.com or by fax to (670) 664-1515. If the Director, Procurement and Supply receives bidders' intention to bid outside the Commonwealth, then bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at 8:00 a.m. local time, February 11, 2008. **However, if no intents to bid are received, bid will be publicly opened at 10:00 a.m., January 30, 2008.**

A bid bond of fifteen percent (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. This security may be in the form of a Certified Check, Cashier's Check, or Bid Bond made payable to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P.O. 500514, Saipan, MP 96950. Bid bonds must be certified by the Office of the Insurance Commissioner.

Bidding procedures shall be in compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, however, Article 7, "Local Business Preference", as amended by Public Laws 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funding for this project.

The bidder submitting the lowest responsible bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 3-301. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with NMHC and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment Bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price. Pursuant to Governor's Directive 251 dated March 15, 2006, bidders are required to include a Clearance from the Office of the Insurance Commissioner with respect to the financial bonding capability of the bidders' chosen Surety.

Performance time for completion of this project is One Hundred Fifty (150) calendar days. Liquidated damages will be assessed at Five Hundred Dollars (US$500.00) per calendar day for delays beyond the established completion date.

This project is funded by a grant from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) provided to the Commonwealth. This project is also subject to Section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968 which requires recipients of HUD funds and the contractors to help insure that the economic opportunities generated by these HUD funds are provided to local low-income residents and the businesses that serve them "to the maximum extent feasible."

NMHC hereby notifies bidders that it will affirmatively insure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, women and small business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit proposals and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, national origin, political affiliation, creed, sex, religion, age, familial status, and disability status.

All documents received shall be the sole property of the NMHC with the exception of the Bid Bond, Certified Check, or Cashier's Check, which will be returned to the proposers after the acceptance and award of contract to the successful contractor.

The Government reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any defects in the said proposals, if in the sole opinion of NMHC, to do so would be in its best interest. All proposals will become the property of the Government.

/s/ Manuel A. Sablan
Chairman & Contracting Officer

/s/ Herman S. Sablan
Director, Division of Procurement & Supply

A GLIMPSE OF THE PAST

Looking back at the Mariana Islands the past 62 years

PHOTO BY DMS

A Carolinian lady, Antonia Mettao, is shown weaving a traditional skirt worn by Carolinian ladies.

Pacific Island forestry services address climate change

Climate change is a major international discussion issue today: it is already affecting our lives and in the future it will drastically affect how we live and survive. Here in the Pacific, the effects of climate change are already being felt in our countries and territories by way of sea-level rise and salt-water inundation, extreme coastal erosion and frequent damaging cyclones.

Climate change is the result of the warming of the earth caused by the increasing emission of greenhouse gases, mainly carbon dioxide, into the atmosphere due to the activities of humans. The burning of fossil fuels—coal and natural gas, which power our factories, power plants and transportation systems—is the largest cause of emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Degradation of forests and deforestation is another important factor contributing 20 percent of greenhouse gas emissions leading to global warming.

The 1997 Kyoto Protocol of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change obligates industrialised countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by an average of 5.2 percent below their 1990 levels by 2008-2012. The clean development mechanism (CDM) is one of the three mechanisms that have been identified to help industrialised countries fulfil their obligations under the Kyoto Protocol.

CDM, which includes reforestation and afforestation, involves joint action between industrialised and developing countries to 'assist the industrialised countries achieve compliance with their greenhouse gas emissions reduction commitments, as well as assist developing countries achieve sustainable development'. It allows industrialised countries to invest in projects that reduce emissions in developing countries as an alternative to more expensive emission reductions in their own countries.

CDM therefore presents a funding opportunity for forestry in developing countries. However, the mechanism is very complicated and difficult to understand. There are many complex issues involved that need to be clarified, and because of this it is difficult to formulate proposals to meet current project requirements. In fact, internationally, only one project has been approved to date. This however is likely to change as negotiations at the recent Bali conference have paved the way for forestry and forest conservation to play a stronger role in mitigating climate change.

Pacific Island countries have been part of the negotiations on climate change over the years, but the Pacific forestry sector has not yet tapped the full potential of CDM. A lack of understanding of the subject and limited input from local forestry experts have hampered development.

Pacific Island countries need a thorough understanding of the implications of climate change, specifically CDM forestry. They also need to be learn skills so they can better handle international, regional and national negotiations on CDM forestry. Closer collaboration among Pacific Island countries and territories and relevant agencies and programmes will help enhance understanding of climate change issues and can prepare for the bundling of individual projects necessary to ensure that benefits accrue to small and large countries alike

As a first step, a regional awareness workshop is being held with the main goal of raising awareness and understanding of climate change and specifically of CDM forestry among national forestry services. Heads of forestry or their representatives from Cook Islands, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu have been invited to a four-day workshop at the Novotel Hotel, Nadi, Fiji, Jan. 14-17, 2008.

The workshop is being organised by the Land Resources Division of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) in collaboration with the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), with funding assistance from GTZ.

For more information, please contact Mr Sairusi Bulai, SPC Forestry Adviser: SairusiB@spc.int <mailto:SairusiB@spc.int>. ***(PR)***

HDM invites nonresident workers to celebrate MLK Day

Human Dignity Movement leader Jerry Custodio is inviting all nonresident workers (Filipinos, Chinese, Bangladeshis, etc.) and their families on Saipan to participate in their celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day today.

"We must commemorate the legacy of Dr. King's struggle for social justice and equality for all," said Custodio in a statement to the *Saipan Tribune*.

Custodio said the mini-march will start at 2:30pm today, Jan. 21, 2008. Assembly area is at the American Memorial Amphitheater in Garapan.

"Our quest for fair treatment and equal opportunity and improved immigration status for long-term aliens residents has long been overdue and now pending in the U.S. Congress," he said. "Your participation and involvement in this event will be appreciated. You"ll make the difference!"

Custodio also said that the Human Dignity Movement is very grateful to all of those who participated in the Volunteer Clean Up Drive at American Memorial Park yesterday.

"Thank you everyone! May justice reign in the CNMI!" ***(HDM)***

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

January 21, 2002

It's a cloud, it's a mist. No, it's dust in Tanapag

Huge clouds of dust that appeared like grey smoke billowing from the machine being used to treat the PCB-laced soil in Tanapag continue to plague residents in the area, despite an earlier promise by the machine's operator to resolve the problem. This came even as the proof of performance test that was supposed to be conducted on the treated soil was postponed anew due to maintenance problems.

Grounded ships endanger corals

There are at least 15 grounded vessels on CNMI waters, and these may cause damage to coral reefs. "When the typhoon actually lifted them [boats], and moved them places, they became grounded," Coastal Resources Management Office's Becky Cruz Lizama said. "They may not contain hazardous materials, but they may have the potential to damage coral reefs." She said the groundings happened due to inadequate contingency plans whenever typhoons approach.

'Labor system is key vs takeover'

The best way to stave off any attempts at a federal takeover in labor and immigration in the CNMI is to put in place a system that is transparent and efficient, which will inherently be fairer for both the workers the employers. Gov. Juan N. Babauta stressed this point before the audience at the Saipan Chamber of Commerce's Installation Dinner Saturday night, adding that, by improving the labor and immigration system, Washington will be convinced of the CNMI's capacity to handle such issues by itself.

January 21, 2003

Guam, Hawaii liaison offices to get axe

Public Health officials are planning to reduce the number of staff in the Guam and Hawaii medical referral liaison offices as part of the government's austerity measures. Public Health Secretary James U. Hofschneider said the number of vehicles in these offices had been decreased by three.

Lockout's ripple effects still hound Commonwealth

Although physically thou-sands of miles away from the CNMI, the labor unrest at several ports in the United States West Cost in late 2002 sent waves of alarm to local government leaders and businessmen, who were worried that the lockout would translate to an acute shortage of household and commercial necessities in the Commonwealth. Despite having practically resolved after only more than a week of work hiatus, the volume of cargoes-bound for several countries in the Asia-Pacific Region-trapped in West Coast ports piled up to unimaginable level. Not even about three months of uninterrupted work was able to unclog thousands of tons of cargoes that were stuck in the waterfront.

Youth Congress observes austerity

Like its mainstream counterparts in the local government, the 5th CNMI Youth Congress has come up with belt-tightening measures of its own to stay afloat amid depleting financial resources. The youth organization plans to sail through the year ahead without the traditional greetings and congratulatory print advertisements that it used to put out during holidays, said Youth Speaker Alvin "Champ" Fejeran.

January 21, 2004

Saipan welcomes 1st flight from Shanghai

The first historical flight of China Eastern Airline finally arrived Tuesday morning at the Saipan International Airport with full seating capacity- a clear signal that the Chinese market is here to help the CNMI tourism industry rebound.

Sugar Dock project hits snag

The Division of Environmental Quality said it would not issue a water quality certification in connection with the proposed dredging and renovation of Sugar Dock, a development that is expected to affect the Commonwealth Port Authority's pending permit application for the project. The Clean Water Act and the CNMI Water Quality Standards require the issuance of the certification before allowing any activity that may result in any discharge into the territorial waters.

Pacific

Dispute over Hawaiian kingdom lands settled after 100 years

HONOLULU (AP)—More than 200 acres (80 hectares) of land that once belonged to the Kingdom of Hawaii will be returned to Native Hawaiians, according to terms of a $200 million (€136.3 million) tentative settlement.

The land to be turned over includes about 80 acres (32 hectares) of the Big Island resort area on Banyon Drive in Hilo, which is currently occupied by several hotels and a golf course.

The agreement, which still has to be approved by the Legislature, is intended to end a long-running dispute over ceded lands that started when the United States government took control of them a century ago.

Under the deal announced Friday, three commercial and industrial properties on Oahu and the Big Island worth $187 million (€127.44 million) will be transferred from the state of Hawaii to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and the state government will also make a $13 million (€8.86 million) cash payment to the agency that looks out for Hawaiians.

The pact will finally bring an end to fighting, legal squabbles and inaction over ceded lands, said Office of Hawaiian Affairs Chairwoman Haunani Apoliona. OHA, whose board voted 9-0 to accept the deal, will continue to receive $15.1 million (€10.29 million) in ceded land revenues each year, the same amount it currently gets by law.

Properties at the center of the argument are referred to as "ceded lands" that the U.S. government took control of from the Republic of Hawaii five years after the 1893 overthrow of the Hawaiian kingdom. Parts of the land dispute were settled in 1993, and this agreement should resolve remaining issues.

Leases from hotels and other businesses on some of the Hilo properties would be honored at least until they expire beginning in 2015, said Jonathan Scheuer, director of land management for OHA. The agency would consider whether to renovate the properties or use the land for other purposes.

Two other properties on Oahu also will be turned over. They include about 100 acres (40 hectares) at Kalaeloa Makai, which officials say has the highest solar energy potential on Oahu, and 18 acres (7 hectares) in Kakaako Makai.

Only the Big Island property generates significant revenue—about $800,000 (€545,180) a year, said Attorney General Mark Bennett.

"The settlement today is just, fair and reasonable for all the people of Hawaii," said Bennett, who negotiated the agreement.

BIRTH OF RARE PYTHON AP

In this photo provided by the Perth Zoo, a Rough-scaled Python hatches at the Perth Zoo in Perth, Australia on Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2008. The rough-scaled Python, one of Australia's rarest pythons, is one of eight to be hatched successfully over three days. Discovered about 30 years ago in the far north-west of Western Australia, only a small number of Rough-scaled Pythons have been discovered and virtually nothing is known of their biology and behavior in the wild. Each one of the python's scales has a central keeled ridge which gives it a rough, sandpaper feel and its common name of Rough-scaled Python. The pythons grow to an approximate length of two meters and have one of the smallest home ranges of any snake, living in the far northwestern Kimberly region of Western Australia.

100 lose jobs as layoffs hit Fiji companies

SUVA, Fiji (Fiji Times)'About 100 people have been laid off by two local companies that are struggling to survive post-2006 coup period.

Flour Mills of Fiji has closed down two milling factories and Fiji Fish Marketing Group has tied up four of its vessels.

Both companies say more job losses are inevitable in the upcoming months if nothing is done by the interim Government.

FMF Group of Companies chairman Hari Punja said they would be closing the rice and pea milling factories because of the impact the reduction in import duty for the two products had on their operations.

The company started sending people home from the beginning of the year. Twenty people have lost their jobs and 20 others are indirectly affected.

Import duty on split peas reduced from 27 to 5 percent and polished white rice from 27 to 15 percent.

Mr. Punja said the company had already placed orders for pre-packs.

"We are gradually closing the activities and will be completely shut down by the end of this month," he said.

He said the mills have been operating for 15 years and the company had put on hold FJ$30 million [US$19.6 million] worth of projects, which would have created 120 new jobs.

He said the company had written to the interim Finance Minister to voice their grievances but the minister had come back to them saying he could not help them.

Interim Finance Minister Mahendra Chaudhry could not be contacted yesterday despite several attempts made.

Fiji Fish executive chairman Grahame Southwick said they had already tied up four vessels which left 60 people unemployed at the beginning of this month.

"We are looking at closing another five or six in the upcoming months depending on the submission we have made to the Finance Ministry," he said.

If five to six more vessels are tied up about 200 to 300 people will be unemployed, he said.

PACIFIC BRIEFS

Cyclone Funa past Vanuatu, to swing south

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (Radio New Zealand International)—Tropical Cyclone Funa is crossing central Vanuatu with storm force winds. The system has winds of up to 135 kilometres an hour [84 miles per hour] as it moves from the island of Espirito Santo eastwards past the island of Ambae. The cyclone is moving at about 20 kilomeres an hour and is set to curve in a southeasterly direction as begins to move away from Vanuatu. Meteorologists say the sea is very rough in the affected areas with heavy swells. People and seagoing vessels are strongly advised not to go out to sea until the system moves out of the area. Heavy rainfall and flooding, including coastal flooding is expected in the affected areas.

Fiji water exporter sues customs agency

SUVA, Fiji (Fijilive)—Natural Waters of Viti Limited, the manufacturer and exporter of Fiji Water, announced today that it had filed court proceedings against the Fiji Islands Revenue & Customs Authority (FIRCA) to resume exports of Fiji Water. This dispute has caused exports of Fiji Water to stop completely. To date, this has affected the shipment of over 400 containers worth several million dollars in exports, the company said in a statement. "For the past two weeks, Natural Waters of Viti Limited has been working diligently to resolve this dispute with FIRCA," said John Cochran, president of Fiji Water operations globally. "We have complied with every request from FIRCA on a timely and complete basis. "We have met numerous times with FIRCA and with other government officials to attempt to resolve this matter, but so far we have been unable to resolve this dispute." "Today, Natural Waters of Viti Limited filed court proceedings seeking resolution. "While we cannot comment further on any of the details of this legal action, it is our hope that this action will assist towards an outcome so that Fiji Water exports will once again flow to markets around the world." FIRCA has blocked Fiji Water exports over a transfer price dispute.

Strikers clash with police in Noumea

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (Radio New Zealand International)—There have been clashes in New Caledonia as riot police dislodged a strike picket at a Noumea bus depot. Police tried to disperse members of the USTKE union in the early hours of this morning for illegally occupying land that belongs to the southern province next to the Carsud bus company. USTKE leader Gerard Jodar says police used tear gas to chase away the unionists, with about a dozen of them suffering injuries. Local radio says police made 50 arrests. Clashes have continued and reports say several vehicles, including some belonging to the police, have been burnt The violence has caused disruption to the traffic in the area, with protestors blocking the toll road out of the city. The strike was launched to demand the reinstatement of a sacked Carsud employee.

Tonga lawmakers call for suspension of minister

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (Radio New Zealand International)—Calls are growing for the Tongan Prime Minister to suspend the tourism minister while an investigation into allegations of corruption is completed.

The Auditor General is investigating allegations, made by the director of tourism, that the minister, Fineasi Funaki, misappropriated funds from the ministry.

People's representative Akilisi Pohiva says it is time for the Prime Minister to show up and respond to the allegations.

"To me, I have no doubt in my mind that all the allegations are true, based on the documents produced to support all the allegations," Pohiva said. "What the Government should have done, the Prime Minister, he should have suspended [the minister]. And not only that, he should go home....he's directly responsible [for] all these things."

A spokesperson for the Prime Minister's office says suspending the Minister is not the proper way forward.

He says the Government doesn't want to pre-empt the findings of the Auditor General and it is fairer to wait for the investigation to be completed.

An independent Tongan MP says the Government should release the details of the investigation into the Minister of tourism.

Member of Parliament Lepolo Taunisila yesterday said rumours had been spreading a long time before the investigation was launched.

"I think that people ought to know, I think it's their right to access the information, whatever that they can release now they should," he said. "But then they are trying to hold back and maybe, I suspect that they would try to cover up something or, to avoid releasing anything."

Lepolo Taunisila says the minister should resign for the duration of the investigation.

Coronation of Tongan king set for August

NUKU-ALOFA, Tonga (Matangi Tonga)—The Coronation of His Majesty King George V on August 1 will be held at the Free Wesleyan Centenary Church, Nuku-alofa.

[PIR editor's note: King George Tupou V was sworn in on September 11, 2006 after the death of his father, King T-ufa-hau Tupou IV. Tupou V put off his formal coronation due to the Nukualofa riots in November, 2006.]

It is anticipated that the Centenary Church will undergo renovations work, but no one was available today from the Free Wesleyan Church office to comment on the preparations.

Celebrations will begin in the capital with various sports activities, including aquatic sports like rowing and swimming as well as a coronation marathon, rugby, volleyball and more.

Other celebrations prior to the coronation day will include a taumafakava (traditional royal kava ceremony), a military parade, traditional dancing and presentations as well as a tupakapakanava (torch lighting ceremony).

It is also expected during the celebrations that awards and medals will be presented.

As from last year, August 1 has been made a public holiday in Tonga to commemorate His Majesty's birthday, originally June 4 but moved to coincide with his coronation this year.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XVIII, Issue No. 21

Published daily at 2/F CIC Centre,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

John Pangelinan PUBLISHER
Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

MEMBER
The Associated Press Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Why caucus?

Imagine an election system that doesn't permit soldiers serving overseas to cast their votes for president. Imagine a system that requires some voters to choose between following the dictates of their faiths or participating in an election. Imagine a system that disenfranchises voters who are hospitalized, or scheduled to work, or out of town on the day and time set for the election. You don't need much imagination for this, because America has just such a system and is using it to help pick the next president. It's called caucuses, and it is the way that citizens express their presidential preferences in more than a dozen states.

Consider the Nevada caucuses set for Saturday morning. Saturday is celebrated as the Sabbath by Jews and Seventh-day Adventists. Synagogues hold Shabbat services on Saturday mornings and, perhaps more important, Orthodox Jews are prohibited from driving or doing other activity that could be viewed as work, which would include participating in caucuses. As the Rev. C. Welton Gaddy, president of the Interfaith Alliance, put it, "In a country that values religious liberty, no person should ever be forced to choose between practicing their religion and participating in their democracy." This is not a hypothetical problem; Nevada has one of the fastest-growing Jewish populations in the country.

There are legitimate considerations that could prompt states to choose to conduct their presidential nominee selection process by caucuses rather than primaries. Caucuses are party-building events designed not only to express presidential preferences but to hash out party platforms. They can create a sense of belonging to a community. But these advantages seem more theoretical than real—most caucusgoers do not stick around to debate the fine points of platforms—and in any event they are outweighed by the all-too-real drawbacks of a system that cannot help but disenfranchise some would-be voters.

The primary calendar is in need of a dramatic overhaul. The fairness—and future—of the caucus system should be a part of that debate.

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

...SEEMS LIKE IT'S ANYBODY'S RACE at THIS POINT, SO I FIGURED I MIGHT AS WELL JUMP IN.
CLETUS fer PREZ
S.C.
©2008 THE AUGUSTA CHRONICLE 1/18

The failures of all politicians past & present

By ANTHONY PELLEGRINO
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Pellegrino is a longtime businessman in the CNMI and is the former president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.

I arrived on Saipan on Jan. 14, 1984. That is about 24 years ago. During this period, I have witnessed major disappointments repeatedly foisted on us citizens by false promises, bad decisions, or no decisions about major projects that affect our daily lives by all past politicians. By politicians, I mean both governors and legislators. These failures by both past governors and past legislators continue today. As we enter the New Year this should disturb all of us deeply. Will our problems ever be corrected? Will the politicians ever have the **will and courage** to correct them? Are the problems so insurmountable? Are we doomed to excuses, excuses, excuses for eternity??? Why? Why?

During my 24 years of living in Saipan, no politicians have been able to install and operate a reliable and inexpensive electric utility system. We do not enjoy potable drinking water. Even the water we receive is never adequate and at times not even safe. We have not been able to resolve our nonresident worker problem. We continually fail to educate our local people to fill the various trades and professions we need. Our hospital doesn't have doctors to properly treat ill patients, but must send them off-island for treatment. Why do these problems continue? Why? Why?

No, I am not criticizing the failures by our past and present leaders for the pleasure of simply complaining. Criticism will not correct the above. But I am deeply interested in wanting to know what is preventing politicians from correcting them when they affect the quality of our lives so badly. If we were a third world country then I could understand why the citizens do not enjoy these basic necessities of life. But we are an important part of the United States. Why? Why?

Is it lack of money that has prevented the building of a new power plant? **No**! The money has always been there! Over the years we have issued almost a dozen or more requests for procurement. Every time we come close to solving the utility problem, we back out and start over again and again. No valid reason is ever given. Throwing money at problems is not and has never been a solution. Why? Why?

Investors, along with their experts, come and go; all to no avail. What happens? Why haven't we gotten the utility plant we so badly need? The United States government has worked with us and pleaded with us to solve this problem and has made the money available. But after 24 years that I can recall, the utility service is worse then when I first arrived here. What is stopping our leaders from giving us a new power plant? Why? Why?

Is it lack of money that prevents us from enjoying healthy drinking water in an adequate supply? **No**! We have issued many RFP's for a better water system. Interested parties with huge amounts of money have come and gone. The United States has pledged to work with us. But it is the same situation as the power plant. It as though a strange power is holding us back from acting. The same question: What happened? Why aren't we enjoying clean drinking water? Why? Why?

Back in 1988 when I was a committee member of the Chamber of Commerce, I recall working closely with the Department of Labor and the House of Legislators to examine and implement better nonresident worker laws. Now in 2008, 20 years later, we are still wrestling for a solution. We draft regulations and try to apply them but to little avail. It is like putting a bandage on gangrene and pretend that it will not spread. Why has this situation gotten so bad that Federalization has to be forced on us? Why can't we solve this chronic problem ourselves? Why? Why?

We have an intelligent local workforce waiting to take over many of the skilled jobs that are currently given to non-resident workers. Why have we failed miserably in motivating our indigenous people to study for these jobs? For example, we have a high need for CUC plant engineers. Where are they and why have they not been trained? Why don't we have many more local teachers in our schools? Why do we continue to rely on nonresident workers or people from the mainland when we have the local population with the intelligence to learn those professions? Why? Why?

We need people to enter the medical profession. Who is motivating the youth to enter medicine? Why do we have to continue bringing in outside doctors? What a great opportunity for us to build our own medical personnel! These are only a few of the many other professions and trades needed. But for some strange reason no one is motivating our people to enter them. Why? Why?

By now you wonder what has this to do with our past and present lawmakers. Everything! They are our leaders. They are elected by us. We put our trust in them. We pay them a high salary and expect a high return. They should know how to solve the problems. But all we get are false promises and excuses as we sink further and

See THE FAILURES on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

The real story in New Hampshire

By ANDREW CLINE
Special to The Washington Post

Andrew Cline is editorial page editor of the New Hampshire Union Leader.

The polls showed Illinois Sen. Barack Obama leading New York Sen. Hillary Clinton by big margins in the weeks before the New Hampshire primary. But on the day of the primary, Clinton won by three percentage points. Why the discrepancy? Why, New Hampshire voters must be racist, of course.

New Hampshire is 95 percent white, some have pointed out, so that explains Obama's loss. The data, however, show otherwise.

The sole explanation offered for the racism argument is that New Hampshire voters did not want their secret racism exposed, so they told pollsters they would vote for Obama. This is known as the Bradley effect. In 1982, Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley ran for governor, and polls had him with a large lead. But on Election Day, Bradley, who was black, lost to his white opponent. It appeared that white voters had lied to the pollsters.

For the Bradley effect to have caused the New Hampshire Democratic primary results, however, New Hampshire voters would have to have decided on the weekend of Dec. 15-16 to begin hiding their latent racism by lying to pollsters. From Dec. 18, 2006, to Dec. 18, 2007, Hillary Clinton led in 53 of the 59 polls conducted in New Hampshire.

Beginning in mid-December, Democratic and Democratic-leaning independents began telling pollsters that they supported or were leaning toward Obama. It defies explanation to assert that white New Hampshire voters suddenly decided to start hiding their racism on that weekend after publicly supporting Clinton for a year.

Furthermore, the Bradley effect is defined by a big discrepancy between polled support for the black candidate and that candidate's actual support on Election Day. That didn't happen in New Hampshire. Obama averaged 38.3 percent in the polls and got 36.4 percent of the vote—a difference of fewer than two percentage points and well within the margin of error. Obama's support in the exit polls was also the same as his support in the voting.

The discrepancy was in Clinton's support. She polled around 30 percent but got 39 percent of the vote. Obama's support was not so much overpolled as Clinton's was underpolled.

The Bradley effect did not happen in the New Hampshire Democratic primary. But two questions remain unanswered: Why did Obama surge in the polls in mid-December? And why did the polls not catch Clinton's surge on primary day?

The answer to the first question is easy: Oprah.

On Dec. 9, Oprah Winfrey stumped for Barack Obama in Manchester. She drew 8,500 people and made huge news for days. Two days later, Obama beat Clinton in a New Hampshire poll for the first time since July.

Until mid-December, women consistently said that they preferred Clinton to Obama by a big margin. By early January, that had shifted, and the polls showed Obama and Clinton statistically tied among women. Oprah drew the attention of New Hampshire women to Obama, they liked what they heard and some began telling pollsters that they were leaning toward him.

On primary day, however, almost half of all women who voted in the Democratic primary voted for Clinton.

Many factors were behind the shift to Clinton: There were the much-discussed moments in which Clinton expressed vulnerability and doubt—her answers to the debate question about her likeability and the question in the Portsmouth coffee shop about the strain of the campaign. John Edwards, Chris Matthews and even Obama seemed to gang up on her in the final days.

Another factor, much less reported, is that the Clinton campaign sent out a mailer a few days before the primary portraying Obama as a less-than-solid supporter of abortion rights. Consider also that Clinton's support came largely from lower-middle-class families, who are routinely underpolled. Samples are weighted to account for that, but that technique does not always work.

Even two days before the primary, nearly half of Democratic voters remained undecided. Many of them told pollsters they were "leaning" toward a candidate, but they had not made up their minds. Obama had more "leaners" than Clinton, somewhat inflating his numbers. In the last day or so, women "leaners" broke from Obama and the other male candidates and joined undecided women in voting for Clinton in big numbers.

Whatever the polls said, some well-informed New Hampshire Democrats privately predicted that Clinton would win or come close. They picked up what the polls did not—that many Democratic women really wanted to vote for Clinton but felt it was their duty as informed voters to check out all the candidates. Those informed Democrats also said Clinton had an operational advantage that could bump her final numbers. Clinton's operation did a masterful job getting her supporters to the polls. That probably accounted for some of her large margin of victory in New Hampshire's two largest cities.

All of the evidence points to one conclusion: Large numbers of women, many of whom wanted in their guts to vote for Clinton, looked closely at Obama, Edwards and Richardson, then decided late to vote for Clinton, either because she was a woman or because, as many said, they thought she was the best candidate. That, not race, is the story of her surprise victory in the New Hampshire primary.

Simple, practical tips to beat high cost of electricity

Editor's Note: The following was submitted by a friend of the CNMI who does not want a byline.

As I read about the high cost of electricity in the CNMI, I feel sorry for the people who can least afford it. So here is a list of things that people can do that are simple and can be applied to everyone's home. Apart from the expensive energy audits, insulation, new Energy Star appliances, etc. etc, maybe these few hints can save some dollars for some people.

Install Dimmer Switches - Then, only use as much light as you need.

Keep Your Fridge and Freezer Full - Food acts as insulation, and lessens the amount of time that the fridge has to run to stay cool.

Install Ceiling Fans - Keep the air circulating in your home, and your air conditioner won't have to work as hard.

Line Dry Your Laundry - Set up a clothesline in your back yard, and let Mother Nature dry your laundry. If this isn't an option, consider hanging clothes on a drying rack or on the shower rod.

Eliminate Phantom Loads - A surprising 75 percent of the energy used by home electronics is consumed when they're turned off. These "phantom" users include: televisions, VCRs, stereos, computers and many kitchen appliances—basically anything that holds a time or other settings. A simple solution? Plug all of these items into power strips, and then get in the habit of turning off the strips between uses.

Shield Your Home From the Sun - Cut down on your air conditioning use by closing curtains and blinds on the sunny side of your home. For even more savings, consider installing tinted window film.

Landscape for Shade - Plant trees to shade your home, and your air conditioning won't have to work as hard.

Turn Off Heat Dry on Your Dishwasher - Most of the energy consumed by your dishwasher goes to heating water. Turn off the heat dry feature, and you'll minimize the drain.

Lower the Temperature on Your Hot Water Heater – Thirteen percent of your home's electricity goes to heating water. You can lower this percentage, by setting your hot water heater to 130-140 degrees. For even more savings, install an insulation jacket, and insulate the first six feet of piping that comes off of your heater.

Take Advantage of Off-Peak Rates - Does your town offer cheaper electric rates during off-peak hours? If so, this is a great time to wash laundry, heat water, and run the dishwasher.

Wash Laundry in Cold Water – Ninety percent of the energy consumed by your washing machine goes to heating water. Turn the dial to cold, and skip the bill.

Only Wash Full Loads - Your washing machine and dishwasher uses a lot of electricity. Minimize the drain by only washing full loads.

Install Low-Flow Showerheads - Less water flowing through your showerhead means less water to heat.

Clean Your Dryer Lint Trap - Remove the lint from your dryer trap after each load to maximize your dryer's efficiency. Then, scrub it down with soapy water and a brush once every couple months to remove any additional lint trapped in the screen.

Clean Your Refrigerator's coils - When your refrigerator has dirty condenser coils it has to work harder to cool your foods. Perform maintenance on your refrigerator once every three months to optimize its efficiency.

Turn Your Stove and Oven Off Early - Turn the stove or oven off a few minutes before your food is done, and let the built up heat finish the job for you.

Don't Put Uncovered Foods/ Drinks in the Refrigerator - Condensation makes the fridge work harder, and costs you more money.

Allow Foods to Cool Before Putting Them in the Refrigerator - Placing hot foods in your fridge will increase the interior temperature, and cause your refrigerator to work harder.

Don't Preheat the Oven Unless You Have To -For casseroles and other foods that require long cook times—preheating the oven usually isn't necessary. The exception: meats and other temperature-critical foods.

Use Your Microwave Instead of the Oven - Microwaves use less electricity, and don't release as much heat into your home.

Other tips:

- Turn the water heater off when you're gone longer than a weekend.
- A low-flow showerhead can reduce water use by 50-70 percent.
- Place floor lamps and hanging lamps in corners. The reflection off the walls will give you more light.
- Turn off all lights, TVs, stereos, and radios if no one will be in the room.
- Plan meals so several things can cook at the same time in the oven.
- Avoid opening the door until the food is done, unless the suspense is too much for you.
- Stop the dryer as soon as clothes are dry, or use the moisture sensor control to automatically shut off the dryer. Overdrying wastes energy and sets in wrinkles.
- Repair leaky faucets, especially hot water faucets.
- Barbecue whenever possible to keep heat out of the kitchen.
- Take short showers (six minutes or less) instead of baths.

THE FAILURES

From Page 10

further into a third rate nation condition where we will finally end up as beggars. And the worst part of all of this is that we citizens accept this silently. As a result we are guilty also. But why does this continue? Why? Why?

I am not insinuating that any of our leaders were or are incompetent or dishonest or not educated. That would be too easy an answer. They are good people who do their best to improve our lives. All the governors and the legislators are educated, have traveled, and are sincere. All have tried to do what is the right thing. It's just that their results are not very effective. It isn't unawareness or not understanding the seriousness of the problems. What prevents them from solving these basic problems? Why? Why?

It hasn't been lack of money because we have received over $700 million from the U.S. Frankly, I am totally confused. Please, would someone in our community make me and others interested like me understand what is it that prevents us from improving these problems. Why? Why?

As I mentioned above, this article is not intended to criticize but to explore why we cannot get these problems resolved. There seems to be a catalyst missing. Just as in a chemical reaction, if one of the main ingredients is missing no reaction takes place. Is there a catalyst we lack? What is this needed missing ingredient that will solve the problems? What actions must be taken to resolve them? There must be a hidden cause. What is it? Why? Why?

We must take a serious look at what has and is happening to our country. I know that solutions are waiting. But where is the **will and determination?**

I would really like to know why I cannot enjoy reliable and inexpensive power, potable water, hire local skilled labors at a decent wage, visit indigenous medically trained professional. I have been here only 24 years and I keep wondering why things are only getting worse. It's time we find out why we cannot solve them. Think about it! Why? Why?

If you have an answer why in all these years we are still talking and **not doing anything to improve,** please send me an email at tonypell@saipan.com or a letter to the editor explaining your thoughts so that we can all understand why and how our leaders both past and present have not resolved our problems. There cannot be any more excuses accepted. Frankly speaking, our leaders have failed us! Why do they continue to make excuses, excuses, excuses? Why? WHY?

The Weather

Sattelite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.
▲80° ▼75°	▲81° ▼75°	▲81° ▼74°	▲79° ▼73°	▲79° ▼73°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Cloudy	▲82	▼75
Palau	Cloudy	▲86	▼77
Yap	Partly Sunny	▲88	▼76
Chuuk	Partly Sunny	▲90	▼80
Pohnpei	Partly Sunny	▲87	▼77
Kosrae	Cloudy	▲86	▼76
Majuro	Sunny	▲85	▼77

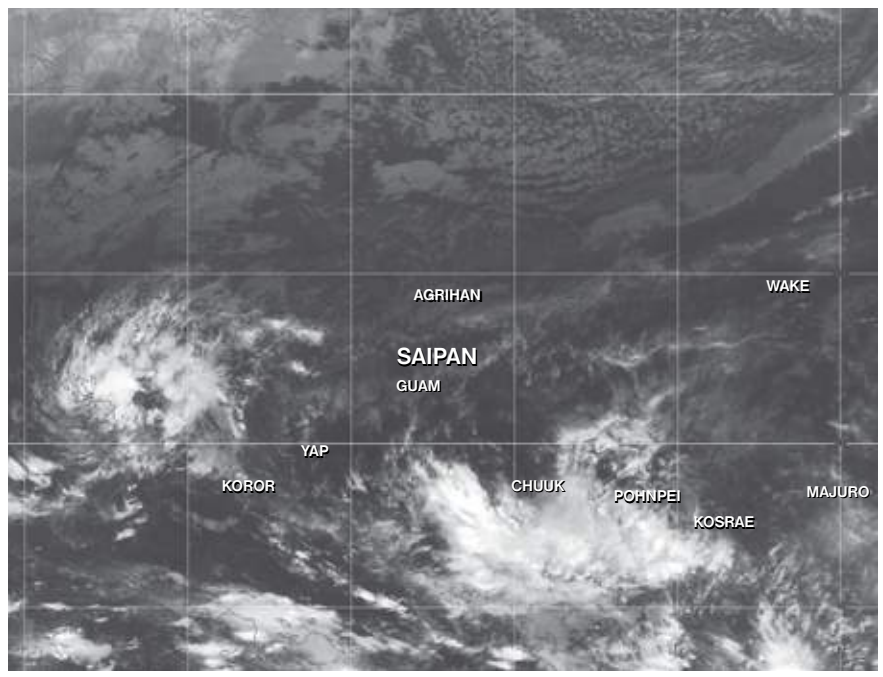
Around The Globe

Auckland	Rain	▲79	▼71
Beijing	Cloudy	▲27	▼10
Hong Kong	Mostly Sunny	▲75	▼68
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲75	▼68
London	Rain	▲50	▼39
Los Angeles	Mostly Cloudy	▲59	▼45
Manila	Cloudy	▲90	▼75
Melbourne	Windy	▲76	▼57
Miami	Cloudy	▲74	▼67
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲23	▼15
Osaka	Rain	▲55	▼32
Paris	Rain	▲48	▼37
Pusan	Rain	▲43	▼19
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲57	▼46
Salem	Sunny	▲41	▼27
San Francisco	Mostly Cloudy	▲54	▼41
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	▲41	▼23
Tokyo	Rain	▲52	▼41
Washington, DC	Partly Sunny	▲33	▼21

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
12:31AM Today	Low Tide:	0.6 Feet
07:59AM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
12:55PM Today	Low Tide:	1.4 Feet
05:39PM Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, SUNDAY, JAN. 20, 2008
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from 25N167E to 21N160E, then continues as a shear line to 18N154E to 15N130E. This area includes Anatahan and Northern Islands through Agrihan. Cloudiness and scattered showers are found along and up to 160 miles north of this boundary. A near-equatorial trough stretches east from 3N132E to 3N140E to a weak circulation south of Chuuk near 2N153 to end at EQ165E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring within 140 miles of a line from 7N145E to 4N150E to 3N162E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:47AM	6:09PM
Tuesday	6:47AM	6:10PM
Wednesday	6:47AM	6:10PM
Thursday	6:47AM	6:11PM
Friday	6:47AM	6:11PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	04:48PM	05:21AM
Tuesday	05:52PM	06:19AM
Wednesday	06:53PM	07:10AM
Thursday	07:49PM	07:56AM
Friday	08:42PM	08:36AM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contribution are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Sunday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $182. Off-island subscription rate is $376 per year. For additional subscription information, call 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Guam

CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	1,2,4,5,6,7
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	2,3,4,5,6,7

Saipan-Seoul

OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608	4:00am	7:35am	1,4,5,7

Guam-Manila

CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror
CO 893	6:30am	8:05am	6
CO 893	8:25am	10:00am	2
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7

Saipan-Manila

CO 895	4:45pm	6:35pm	6
CO 895	6:45pm	8:35pm	3

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078	8:30am	11:10am	Daily

Guam-Nagoya

CO 971	7:45am	10:30am	1,2,4,5,6,7
NW 023	4:15pm	7:05pm	Daily
CO 904	4:35pm	7:25pm	Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 078	8:30am	1:30pm	Daily via Nagoya
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm	Daily

Guam-Narita

JO 982	4:15am	7:00am	Daily
CO 961	7:20am	9:55am	Daily
CO 006	1:00pm	3:45pm	Daily
JO 942	3:30pm	6:15pm	Daily
NW 081	3:55pm	6:50pm	Daily
NW 073	4:15pm	7:00pm	Daily
CO 963	4:50pm	7:30pm	Daily

Saipan-Osaka

NW 083	4:30pm	7:25pm	Daily

Guam-Hongkong

CO 910	7:45pm	10:40pm	1,5

Saipan-Guanzhou

CZ 3008	5:00am	8:00am	2,6

Saipan-Rota

CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7

Rota-Guam

CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

Saipan-Shanghai

MU 590	4:20am	7:00am	2,6

ARRIVALS

Guam-Saipan

CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	1,4,5,6,7
CO 9316	3:30am	4:20am	2
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	2,3,4,5,6,7

Seoul-Saipan

OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 603	7:40pm	10:00am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
OZ 607	6:50pm	2:50am+1	3,7 via Busan
OZ 607	7:30pm	2:50am+1	4 via Busan

Busan-Saipan

OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	3,4,6,7

Manila-Guam

CO 894	11:20am	4:55pm	2
CO 894	7:45pm	1:20am+1	6
CO 892	9:45pm	5:25am+1	3 via Koror
CO 892	9:45pm	6:30am+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:15pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Manila-Saipan

CO 890	9:15am	2:55pm	6
CO 890	11:45am	5:35pm	3

Nagoya-Saipan

NW 077	8:45pm	1:10am+1	Daily

Nagoya-Guam

NW 024	10:00am	2:40pm	Daily
CO 970	11:30am	4:00pm	Daily
CO 905	8:25pm	12:50am+1	1,3,4,5,6,7

Narita-Saipan

NW 076	10:35am	3:05pm	Daily
NW 077	6:15pm	1:10am+1	Daily via Nagoya

Narita-Guam

JO 941	9:30am	2:05pm	Daily
NW 074	9:45am	2:25pm	Daily
CO 962	11:05am	3:35pm	Daily
CO 007	5:15pm	9:50pm	Daily
NW 082	8:30pm	1:15am+1	Daily
CO 964	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily
JO 981	9:30pm	2:05am+1	Daily

Osaka-Saipan

NW 084	10:40am	3:10pm	Daily

Hongkong-Guam

CO 910	11:40pm	6:20am+1	1,5

Guanzhou-Saipan

CZ 3007	8:00pm	4:00am+1	1,5

Rota-Saipan

CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6

Guam-Rota

CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6

Shanghai-Saipan

MU 589	8:05am	3:00am+1	1,5

(Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana. ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Business

Bush pushes $150-B economic aid package

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Bush said Saturday "the kind of spending projects that would have little immediate impact on our economy" should not be part of any stimulus package, setting the stage for a possible clash with Democrats.

Bush and the Democratic-controlled Congress are emphasizing their desire to work together as they rush negotiations on a short-term measure to prevent the economy from falling into recession. But while there is broad agreement that one-time tax rebates for consumers will be part of the package, there are different priorities at work for the rest of the measure.

Bush wants to devote a portion to incentives for businesses to invest. Democrats want to add spending for food stamps, unemployment benefits and infrastructure projects.

"This growth package must be built on broad-based tax relief that will directly affect economic growth - not the kind of spending projects that would have little immediate impact on our economy," the president said in his weekly radio address. "This growth package must be temporary and take effect right away."

Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., speaking for the Democrats in their own radio address, said any stimulus package needs to help Americans hardest hit by the weakened economy. He said Democrats want to work with the president and congressional Republicans on a plan that includes tax rebates for most Americans, as well as one-time increases in some programs.

"Economists agree that middle- and working-class people are likely to spend that money in a way that will effectively stimulate the economy and create jobs," Frank said.

"We must cooperate to enact immediately aggressive measures that respond to the economic downturn, while we simultaneously continue a healthy debate about the role of government in a modern economy," Frank said.

On Friday, Bush said any plan, to be effective, would need to represent roughly 1 percent of the gross domestic product, or about $140 billion to $150 billion.

Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson said the biggest chunk of the economic package the administration is considering would be targeted to individual taxpayers, though he would not talk about how big these checks might be. A Republican official, speaking on condition of anonymity because the package is not finalized, said the president was hoping to target about $100 billion toward individuals and about $50 billion toward businesses.

AP

President Bush is shown addressing the country's economic woes on a bank of LCD televisions at J&R Music and Computer World in New York, Friday, Jan. 18, 2008.

Earnings won't bail out market this time

NEW YORK (AP)—In Roman mythology, Janus is the god of doorways, and January is in turn the doorway of the year. For Wall Street, this first month of 2008 has brought none of the optimism that the myth implies—instead, a disappointing stream of economic and earnings reports has investors dreading what's still to come.

With investors worried that the credit crisis is worsening and that a recession is all but likely, the Standard & Poor's 500 index fell nearly 10 percent in the first 18 days of 2008. This month is shaping up to be the worst January on record for the well-tracked index since 1970, when blue chips shed 7.65 percent.

And Wall Street analysts warn investors not to expect corporate earnings to bail out stocks. About 60 members of the S&P 500 have reported results, most of them failing to surpass Wall Street projections.

"We keep waiting to see that other shoe drop, and so far corporate earnings are doing terribly," said Howard Silverblatt, S&P's senior index analyst. "Because of all the bank write-offs, the fourth quarter is basically history."

Major global banks and brokerages wrote down about $90 billion worth of bad debt during the fourth quarter because of exposure to risky subprime mortgage securities. And, more importantly, top banking executives still aren't willing to say they've reached bottom.

Disappointing results from financials like Citigroup Inc. and Merrill Lynch & Co. weighed on Wall Street this past week, and contributed to the market's huge swoon that took the S&P 500 down 5.4 percent and the Dow Jones industrials down 4.02 percent. There were some bright spots—both IBM Corp. and General Electric Corp. surpassed expectations and put investors at ease about their prospects for 2008—but overall, the market's sentiment about earnings was bleak.

Tax rebates could boost economy quickly

WASHINGTON (AP)—With the economy's prospects growing bleaker seemingly by the day, politicians in both parties have rallied around the three Ts, the mantra that any stimulus package needs to be timely, targeted and temporary.

One might add the three Bs as well—the ability to deliver the biggest bang for the buck. In that regard, tax rebates have quickly risen to the top of a list that also includes extended unemployment benefits and a boost in food stamp payments.

All three proposals have one very big advantage for politicians worried about what the economy will look like when voters go to the polls in November. They offer the promise of getting assistance out quickly to low and moderate income people who won't delay in spending the extra cash.

That is considered crucial given the precarious state of the economy at the moment. The great fear is that consumers, who have been the standout performer during the current expansion, could now be faltering under the successive blows of a steep slump in housing, spiraling energy costs, a spreading credit squeeze, rising unemployment and falling stock prices.

Some analysts believe the stimulus package may already be too late to prevent a recession, but even the most pessimistic think it is still needed to mitigate the length and severity of a downturn.

Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke lent his considerable weight on the side of a stimulus package on Thursday. "Getting money to low and moderate income people is good in the sense of getting a bang for the buck," he told the House Budget Committee. He said packages in the range of $50 billion to $150 billion would be "reasonable" to help the economy.

Bush has gone down the tax rebate road before. Back in 2001, he added refunds of up to $300 per individual and $600 per household as a recession-fighting element of the tax cut plan that had been the centerpiece of his 2000 campaign.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Quiznos offers new lineup, slogan

DENVER (AP)—Is it a sandwich or a taco? A snack or a meal? The Sammie, the newest product from Quiznos, can fit just about any category, a 200- to 300-calorie concoction of meats and greens folded into flatbread that sells for $2. It's a key ingredient in Greg Brenneman's recipe to reshape the 5,200-restaurant sandwich chain, along with delivery, online ordering, new venues like kiosks in airports, colleges and likely even a big box retailer. Brenneman's agenda is ambitious, designed to better position Quiznos in the fast-food industry where restaurants aim to please consumers who want convenient food while keeping one eye on the pocketbook and another on the sagging economy. The Sammie is one of the more innovative products in the value-priced snack or sandwich category, said Darren Tristano, executive vice president of Technomic Inc., a restaurant consulting company.

Engines lift GE's fourth-quarter profit

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP)—General Electric Co. delivered some cheer Friday to investors worried about a slowing economy, saying its quarterly profit rose 4 percent and reaffirming its outlook for 2008. The conglomerate's big-ticket business—jet engines, railroad locomotives, and water treatment plants—powered GE's profit, posting $3.4 billion, or 26 percent more than the fourth quarter of 2006. It also gave GE a global reach that should help blunt the impact of a possible U.S. recession. "Every place we went, there's a need for power, there's a need for planes, and there's just no signs that this global infrastructure boom is slowing at all," chief executive Jeff Immelt told investors in a conference call. Total net income rose to $6.7 billion, or 66 cents a share, in the fourth-quarter ended Dec. 31, from $6.44 billion, or 62 cents a year earlier. Earnings from continuing operations climbed to 68 cents a share in the latest period, from 58 cents in the prior-year period.

VC investments rise to six-year high

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Venture capital investments in U.S. startups climbed to a six-year high of $29.4 billion in 2007, raising hope that ample money will still be available to back promising new ideas even if the staggering economy falls into a recession. The amount of venture capital spread across 3,813 deals represents the industry's busiest year since $40.6 billion went into nearly 4,500 U.S. startups in 2001, according to data scheduled for release Saturday by Thomson Financial, PricewaterhouseCoopers and the National Venture Capital Association. The $29.4 billion invested last year marked an 11 percent increase from $26.6 billion in 2006. In 2001, venture capitalists were actually curtailing their investments after the dot-com economy pushed the U.S. economy into its last recession.

Minn. health system purges drug trinkets

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—When a Duluth-based operator of hospitals and clinics purged the pens, notepads, coffee mugs and other promotional trinkets drug companies had given its doctors over the years, it took 20 shopping carts to haul the loot away.

The operator, SMDC Health System, intends to ship the 18,718 items to the west African nation of Cameroon.

The purge underscored SMDC's decision to join the growing movement to ban gifts to doctors from drug companies.

SMDC scoured its four hospitals and 17 clinics across northeastern Minnesota and northwestern Wisconsin for clipboards, clocks, mouse pads, stuffed animals and other items decorated with logos for such drugs as Nexium, Vytorin and Lipitor.

Trinkets, free samples, free food and drinks, free trips and other gifts have pervaded the medical profession, but observers say that's starting to change.

"We just decided for a lot of reasons we didn't want to do that any longer," Dr. Kenneth Irons, chief of community clinics for SMDC, said Friday.

So SMDC put together a comprehensive conflict-of-interest policy that, among other things, limits access to its clinics by drug company representatives. Employees suggested the "Clean Sweep" trinket roundup, Irons said.

Ken Johnson, a spokesman for the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, had heard of hospitals and clinics banning promotional items before, but said SDMC's purge was unprecedented.

"I've never seen nor heard of a systematic roundup of pens and coffee mugs before," Johnson said.

Nation

McCain wins key South Carolina primary

AP

Republican presidential hopeful, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., right, waves to the crowd as he and his wife, Cindy, left, take the stage at an election night watch party at The Citadel, in Charleston, S.C., Saturday, Jan. 19, 2008.

By DAVID ESPO
AP SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Sen. John McCain won a hard-fought South Carolina primary Saturday night, avenging a bitter personal defeat in a bastion of conservatism and gaining ground in an unpredictable race for the Republican presidential nomination. Democrats Hillary Rodham Clinton and Barack Obama split the spoils in Nevada caucuses marred by late charges of dirty politics.

"We've got a long way to go," McCain told The Associated Press in an interview. The man whose campaign was left for dead six months ago quickly predicted that victory in the first southern primary would help him next week when Florida votes, and again on Feb. 5 when more than two dozen states hold primaries and caucuses.

"This is one step on a long journey," Clinton told cheering supporters in Las Vegas. She captured the popular vote, but Obama edged her out for national convention delegates at stake, taking 13 to her 12.

Obama issued a statement that said he had conducted an "honest, uplifting campaign ... that appealed to people's hopes instead of their fears."

If the Democrats had co-front-runners, the Republicans had none, and looked to South Carolina to begin winnowing an unwieldy field.

McCain defeated former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee in a close race in the state that snuffed out his presidential hopes eight years ago. The Arizonan was gaining 33 percent of the vote to just under 30 percent for his closest rival.

"It just took us a while. That's all. Eight years is not a long time," McCain told the AP.

Appearing before supporters, Huckabee was a gracious loser, congratulating McCain for "running a civil and a good and a decent campaign."

Far from conceding defeat in the race, he added, "The process is far, far from over."

Former Tennessee Sen. Fred Thompson was in a struggle for third place with about 16 percent, after saying he needed a strong showing to sustain his candidacy. Another Republican, California Rep. Duncan Hunter, dropped out even before the votes were tallied.

Mix of snow, sleet blows across South

ATLANTA (AP)—Snow, rain and sleet spread across parts of the South on Saturday, dusting lawns and shrubs with flakes and leading airlines to cancel several hundred flights.

Enough snow fell in Montgomery, Ala., for children to make snowballs to toss in front of the state Capitol, although the snow melted on contact with pavement.

Eleven-year-old Khryshanna Taylor saw snow for the first time Saturday in Montgomery and was unimpressed.

"I have decided that I don't like snow!" she said as she hurried home after a brief attempt at a snowball fight. "If it snows again, I'm going to move out of the state!"

Snow also fell as far south as southwestern Mississippi, with totals of as much as 3 inches, although the ground was too warm to allow it to accumulate. It was that area's first snowfall since 2001, the National Weather Service said.

All five runways at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport were reported open, but an automated Internet report from the Federal Aviation Administration said some flights bound for the airport were delayed by more than four hours.

Delta Air Lines Inc. had about 280 flight cancellations Saturday, spokeswoman Betsy Talton said. AirTran Airways spokesman Tad Hutcheson said 78 flights were canceled by afternoon and more cancellations were expected.

Bloomberg has harsh words for Washington

LOS ANGELES (AP)—New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who says he's not a candidate for president, chose electoral vote-rich California for a scorching attack Saturday on Washington.

Without singling out either party for blame, he said Washington has failed to keep up with the need for new airports, roads, water systems and bridges across America.

While China and other nations are investing heavily in ports and high-speed trains "Washington doesn't have a plan" to address crumbling U.S. infrastructure, Bloomberg said.

In remarks clearly aimed at a national audience, the mayor said politics trumps common sense in Congress, where pork-barrel spending takes priority. Inevitably, the economy will be strangled if goods and people can't move easily, he warned.

"In politics, winning elections and protecting a party majority is more important than solving problems. And so short-term pork invariably wins over long-term investments," the mayor said.

Washington "spends money to win votes and collect campaign cash no matter what the real needs are," Bloomberg added. "It's hurting our country."

The Democrat-turned-Republican-turned-independent mayor appeared with Govs. Arnold Schwarzenegger of California, a Republican, and Ed Rendell of Pennsylvania, a Democrat, to announce a coalition that would push for more investment in ports, highways and other infrastructure. Both governors are known for reaching across party lines to achieve compromise.

"We have an independent here, we have a Democrat here, a Republican. I mean, how much better can you get?" Schwarzenegger said.

The coalition, Building America's Future, will be a not-for-profit organization that will be made up of elected and other officials. It will work with presidential candidates and the platform committees of the national political parties to bring attention to infrastructure needs, which Schwarzenegger said exceed $1 trillion.

Bloomberg appearance came on the second day of a trip that also took him to Texas, another key state on the presidential election map where he met privately Friday with an expert in third-party ballot access who served as campaign manager for H. Ross Perot.

Posthumous honors for black WWII vet

MILWAUKEE (AP)—Booker Townsell rarely spoke about his time in the Army or his wrongful conviction in one of the largest courts-martial of World War II.

But his past took center stage on Saturday, when the late Townsell received military honors at his grave site and a salute. His family also accepted the U.S. flag that was denied at his burial almost 25 years ago.

The ceremony and reception that followed attracted hundreds of people, including local and state dignitaries, a representative from the Army and a lawmaker who helped restore Townsell's name.

Townsell was one of 43 black soldiers court-martialed after an Italian prisoner was found lynched following a night of rioting at Fort Lawton in Seattle in 1944. The military court found 28 soldiers guilty of rioting over alleged resentment of Italian prisoners' living conditions on the post.

Some soldiers were sentenced to as many as 25 years in prison. Townsell served two.

"It was just an incident that happened to him and he desperately wanted to move on with his life," said Lashell Drake, Townsell's granddaughter.

Townsell came home to Milwaukee after serving his sentence, worked in a factory for 25 years, ran a lounge with his brother and raised four children. He loved his family, worked hard, was patriotic and active in the community, especially in getting people to vote, Drake said. He said Townsell, who died in 1984 at the age of 69, rarely discussed his military past.

"He was truly a man of honor and so when we found out about what happened to his name it was something that we wanted to do," Drake said. "We wanted to restore his name because we always knew him as honorable. So this dishonorable discharge had to be changed to honorable as far as we were concerned."

The family searched for Townsell's name online and found a reference to him in a 2005 book about the incident, "On American Soil: How Justice Became a Casualty of World War II." The family then contacted the author, Jack Hamann, a former television news reporter.

With the help of Hamann and two congressmen, the Townsells petitioned military investigators to reopen the case. Two other families and a surviving soldier, Samuel Snow of Florida, joined the petition.

ACROSS THE NATION

4 men arrested in killing of moms, kids

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Four men were arrested Saturday in connection with the fatal shootings of a baby, a toddler and their mothers while the women held their children in their arms, police said. Ronald Davis and Dante Hobson both face four counts of murder, felony murder, robbery and conspiracy to commit robbery in the Jan. 14 slayings, police said at a news conference. A third suspect, Zarumin Coleman, faces charges of conspiracy to commit robbery and assisting a criminal. Jasper Frazier faces two counts of attempting to commit robbery and conspiracy to commit robbery, authorities said. Friends Andrea Yarrell and Gina Hunt, both 24, and their children, ages 4 months and 23 months, were all shot repeatedly late Monday in their home in an attack that angered the city.

Border cop dies, struck by fleeing truck

YUMA, Ariz. (AP)—A Border Patrol agent trying to stop a vehicle that had illegally entered the U.S. was struck and killed Saturday in southeastern California, agency officials said. The agent was killed about 20 miles west of Yuma in the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area, a spot along the border that is popular with off-road vehicle enthusiasts and frequently used by smugglers. The agent attempted to impede the vehicle's progress before he was hit, but the Border Patrol did not immediately have more information, said agent Eric Anderson, a spokesman for the agency's Yuma sector. The name of the agent killed was not immediately released because his family had not been notified.

Boy, 15, dead in NY school stabbing

HEMPSTEAD, N.Y. (AP)—A 15-year-old boy was stabbed during an after-school robbery at a suburban high school and died at a hospital early Saturday, authorities said. Michael Alguera was playing handball with two friends on a court at Hempstead High School on Friday afternoon when they were confronted by as many as nine people, some of them masked, said police in Long Island's Nassau County. "He was doing what all kids do, playing, and then this happens," said Detective Sgt. Anthony Repalone. "This was a senseless incident." The attackers, possibly gang members, robbed the boys of a cell phone and an MP3 player, then stabbed the high school sophomore in the torso with a long knife, police said. He died at Mercy Medical Center in Rockville Centre, officers said. The boy's companions, ages 15 and 16, were not hurt. No one had been arrested, police said.

Asia

2 arrested in Bhutto assassination plot

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—A 15-year-old detained near the Afghan border has confessed to joining a team of assassins sent to kill Benazir Bhutto, officials said Saturday, announcing the first arrests in the case since the attack that killed the opposition leader.

Police also announced they had foiled new suicide attacks against the country's Shiite minority.

Interior Secretary Kamal Shah confirmed the arrest of two people in the town of Dera Ismail Khan in North West Frontier province, and said one—a teenage boy—had confessed involvement in the Dec. 27 attack that killed Bhutto. He said interrogators were trying to get corroborating testimony from the other detainee before accepting the confession.

In the southern city of Karachi, meanwhile, the police chief said officers detained five men with explosives, detonators and a small quantity of cyanide intended for attacks on this week's Shiite Muslim festival of Ashoura.

"With these arrests we have foiled major attacks," said police chief Azhar Farouqi, adding that the militants may have wanted to put the cyanide into the municipal water supply.

Security officials elsewhere in the country said they had arrested at least 55 other terrorist suspects in a crackdown apparently sparked by a surge in rebel attacks along the restive border with Afghanistan and a spate of bombings targeting Shiites.

The growing bloodshed has cast doubts on the ability of the security forces to maintain peace during the campaign for parliamentary elections on Feb. 18. It has also sparked calls from opposition politicians for President Pervez Musharraf to step down.

In North West Frontier province, a senior intelligence official said the 15-year-old suspect in the Bhutto assassination told investigators that a five-person squad was dispatched to Rawalpindi, where Bhutto was killed, by Baitullah Mehsud, a militant leader with strong ties to al-Qaida and an alliance with the Taliban in nearby Afghanistan.

The official, who asked not to be named because he was not authorized to speak to the media, said the boy was arrested Thursday and was also involved in a plot to attack Shiites during the Ashoura festival on Sunday.

Sunni extremists, who regard Shiites as heretics, often attack the community during Ashoura. On Thursday, 11 people died and 20 were injured in a suicide attack on a Shiite mosque in the northern city of Peshawar.

PEACE TALKS AP

Filipino Muslim children display hand signs for peace as they march in suburban Bicutan, south of Manila, Sunday, Jan. 20, 2008. Hundreds of Muslim children marched for peace and the resumption of peace talks between the government and Muslim separatists rebels.

British PM says China should eye London

BEIJING (AP)—British Prime Minister Gordon Brown began a major effort Friday to position Britain as China's premier international business partner, offering London as a base for distribution of the Asian nation's state fund for private investment.

Visiting Beijing with a high-profile delegation of business leaders, Brown also opened a local office of the London Stock Exchange and discussed cooperation on education, alternative power, climate change and sustainable cities with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao.

Brown's two-day visit, which also takes in Shanghai, is calculated to gain an advantage on the United States and the rest of Europe to the investment opportunities and economic benefits offered by both China's increasingly open domestic consumer market and growing money pot for overseas investment.

Early Saturday, Brown got his first look at the 91,000-seat National Olympic Stadium, the basket-like sculpture—nicknamed the "Bird's Nest"—that will be the centerpiece of the Beijing 2008 Olympics.

"This is going to be the greatest Olympic Games ever," Brown told reporters after his stadium tour. "I'm flattered that British design has been involved ... for the athletes it's going to be great, for the public it's going to be wonderful."

Brown said that China's $200 billion sovereign wealth fund could offer significant investments for British businesses, adding that he did not share the concerns of other countries about the state funds.

"Where others may wish to see a risk, I see the rise of China and the reality of globalization not as a threat but as an opportunity," Brown told a summit of Chinese and British business leaders after he was greeted by Wen at the Great Hall of the People in central Beijing.

The United States has been particularly skittish about accepting investments from sovereign wealth funds and state-funded companies, fearing interference from foreign governments in private companies.

U.S. lawmakers successfully killed off part of a deal between DP World and British port operator Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Co., or P&O, last year—a furor in Congress led the United Arab Emirates company to sell the division that manages U.S. ports.

ASIAN BRIEFS

US troops kill, wound 2 dozen Taliban

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—U.S. and Afghan troops killed or wounded more than two dozen Taliban fighters during a 21-hour battle in eastern Afghanistan that ended Saturday, military officials said. The battle began Friday when U.S. and Afghan troops attacked a group of insurgents moving into position to attack a base in the eastern mountains of Kunar province, along the border with Pakistan, NATO's International Security Assistance Force said. U.S. and Afghan forces received intelligence earlier Friday that insurgents were planning a mass attack, it said in a statement. Kunar province is one of the most violent in the country. U.S. troops stationed there are routinely attacked by Taliban fighters and foreign insurgents allied with al-Qaida.

Pope praises courage of Philippine priest slain by suspected al-Qaida-linked extremists

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Pope Benedict XVI praised the courage of a Roman Catholic priest slain by suspected al-Qaida-linked extremists on a remote southern island, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines said Saturday.

The Pope was "saddened" over the "brutal and tragic" killing of Reynaldo Roda late Tuesday in Tawi-Tawi province, the bishops' group said in a statement, quoting from a letter from Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Tarciso Bertone. "Paying tribute to the courage and faithfulness shown by this generous priest in his ministry as head of Notre Dame School, his holiness commends Father Roda's example to priests and people throughout the region, and especially to the young," Bertone said. Roda, 55, ran Notre Dame High School—which has about 30 students—on the island township of Tabawan for the past 10 years, church officials said

Malaysian singer banned for baring chest

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—A popular Malaysian rock singer has been banned from appearing on television entertainment programs for three months after he sparked an uproar by baring his chest during a live TV concert, reports said Saturday. Faizal Tahir—one of Muslim-majority Malaysia's most exuberant stage performers—stripped off his jacket, undershirt and belt and flung them into the audience at a Jan. 13 concert in Kuala Lumpur. The moves revealed a bright red Superman logo painted on his chest. The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission slammed Faizal's premeditated stunt as "insensitive" to viewers and Malaysian culture, the New Straits Times said. "It is a serious offense in a live entertainment program," the commission was quoted as saying in a statement.

Thai court drops case against top party

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP)—A Thai court rejected legal challenges against a party allied with ousted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra on Friday, paving the way for the installment of the first elected government since a 2006 military coup.

The country's Supreme Court dismissed two cases that could have kept the People's Power Party, or PPP, from taking or holding power, despite its coming out on top in a Dec. 23 general election, the first since the September 2006 military coup toppled the former prime minister.

Parliament is scheduled to convene Monday, and a government could be formed soon after that.

The party—organized after Thaksin's Thai Rak Thai Party was dissolved by court order—has vowed to reinstate the populist policies that swept the former prime minister's party into power largely due to his success in the country's rural areas.

Thaksin, accused of widespread corruption and barred from political office for five years, has lived abroad since his ouster.

"The justice we received today has cleared another hurdle," PPP spokesman Kuthep Saikrajang said. "We don't foresee any problem in forming a new government."

The court ruling is the latest victory for Thaksin's supporters in their battle with those who ousted the former leader, though it left open the option that some of the complaints could be filed again in another court.

Since Thaksin's oustter, the military and the interim government it appointed demonized him in the press and changed the constitution to rein in the power of political parties.

Mia Farrow confronts Cambodian police

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP)—Cambodian police blocked Mia Farrow from holding a genocide memorial ceremony Sunday at a Khmer Rouge prison, at one point forcefully pushing her group away from a barricade.

The Cambodian government had barred the ceremony several days ago and police on Sunday sealed off all roads leading to the Khmer Rouge's infamous Tuol Sleng prison, which is now a genocide museum.

The American actress and her group arrived at one of the barricades and refused to go away, according to an Associated Press reporter at the scene. Police started pushing the group, which eventually returned to a waiting car and drove off. Nobody appeared to have gotten hurt.

Farrow could not be immediately reached for comment.

Farrow, who is working with the U.S.-based advocacy group Dream for Darfur, was in Cambodia as part of a seven-nation tour of countries to call attention to the humanitarian crisis in Sudan.

She had planned to light an Olympic-style torch outside the former prison to send a message to China—the next Olympic host and one of Sudan's major trading partners—to press the Sudanese government to end abuses in Darfur.

More than 200,000 people have died in Darfur since 2003 when ethnic African rebels took arms against the Arab-dominated central government. Khartoum denies accusations it committed widespread war crimes.

The Cambodian government, which has strong economic and political ties with China, said days ago it would prevent the 62-year-old actress from going through with the ceremony. The government accused Farrow of having "a political agenda against China" and staging the event for political rather than humanitarian reasons.

World

Iraqi Shiite festival escapes bloodshed

BAGHDAD (AP)—Hundreds of thousands of Shiite Muslims clambered aboard buses or began trekking homeward on foot Saturday at the end of Ashoura, a 10-day ritual to cleanse the spirit and scourge the body in honor of their founding saint.

The high holy days in Karbala passed absent the slaughter of pilgrims witnessed in the years since the U.S.-led invasion nearly half a decade ago, but militants did assault gatherings of Ashoura worshippers elsewhere.

Fearing a spectacular attack on the masses of self-flagellating faithful who marched on the shrines in Karbala, Iraqi authorities flooded the city with 30,000 police and soldiers. Soviet-made tanks guarded approach roads.

A relatively uneventful passage of Ashoura had been seen by U.S. and Iraqi officials as a rigorous test of the decline in violence in the country since Washington sent in 30,000 additional troops last year and many Sunni insurgents suddenly joined American forces in the fight against al-Qaida in Iraq.

On Saturday, a rocket slammed into a busy market in the northern city of Tal Afar, killing at least seven people who had completed the ritual and gathered there afterward, according to Najim Abdullah, the mayor.

Two bombs hidden under trash blasted an Ashoura procession in Kirkuk, killing at least two, said police Brig. Gen. Burhan Tayeb Taha. Kirkuk, 180 miles north of Baghdad, has seen a rise in violence as militants have fled crackdowns elsewhere.

And earlier in the week 20 people were killed in two suicide bombings against groups assembled for Ashoura in Diyala province, the still-violent and religiously mixed territory north of Baghdad.

AP

An Iraqi boy slashes his head with a blade as sign of grief for Imam Hussein during Ashoura observances in Najaf, 160 kilometers (100 miles) south of Baghdad, Iraq, Saturday, Jan. 19, 2008.

But in Karbala, provincial Gov. Aqil al-Khazali said 2 million Ashoura pilgrims passed peacefully through the holy city, home to the golden domed mosques of Imam Hussein and his half brother Imam Abbas.

The festival, largely banned by Saddam Hussein and his minority Sunni Muslim regime, recalls the death of Hussein, grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, in a seventh century battle near Karbala. The combat defined the split between Islam's Sunni and Shiite sects.

Men wearing black or white robes danced in circles and chanted as they swayed in unison.

They pounded their chests, slashed their heads and beat their bloodied foreheads with the flat sides of swords and knives.

Abbas Mohammed, wearing a black shirt and pants to symbolize his grief over Hussein's death, traveled from Baghdad to Karbala.

"I came ... in defiance of terrorists and difficulties," the 41-year-old health ministry employee said.

Naseer Mohammed, a 35-year-old Karbala resident, spoke with his face bloodied after he cut his forehead with a sword as part of the rituals.

"I do not feel any pain despite the blood. The security measures were little bit excessive and they create delays and difficulties for us, yet they make us feel safer," he said.

While there was no catastrophic attack during Ashoura, Sunni and Shiite militants kept up the steady, although diminished, level of violence Saturday in regions to the north. Bombs, suicide assaults, rockets and death squad murder left behind the corpses of at least 21 more Iraqis, including those killed in Kirkuk and Tal Afar.

Hezbollah claims to have Israeli bodies

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP)—Hezbollah's reclusive leader claimed Saturday the militant group had the remains of Israeli soldiers killed in Lebanon during the 2006 war, saying the dead were left behind "in our villages and fields."

Sheik Hassan Nasrallah's graphic description appeared aimed at pressuring Israel to accept a prisoner exchange. Israel is thought to be holding at least seven Lebanese prisoners while Hezbollah has two Israeli soldiers it captured in July 2006, triggering the war.

"Your army left behind the remains of soldiers in our villages and fields," he said, in a mocking address to the Israeli people, during a speech to tens of thousands of Shiites taking part in commemorations marking Ashoura, their most important holiday. "They (Israeli army) were so weak on the field that they left behind remains not of one, two or three but a large number of your soldiers."

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's office refused to respond to Nasrallah's comments. The Israeli military condemned them as "cruel and cynical," although it refused to address the substance of the claims.

"His speech demonstrates that the Hezbollah terrorist organization violates the values that are sacred to all religions including Islam," the statement said. "We call upon all those with the most basic common sense to view him as cowardly and to condemn him."

Commentators on Israeli evening newscasts were adamant that no Israeli bodies from the 2006 fighting were unaccounted for.

"All the fallen soldiers have been buried," Channel 10 Arab affairs analyst Tzvika Yehezkeli said. "His claims regarding a corpse are being denied in Israel, both in the defense establishment and other departments which dealt with the war. It is not true."

Other commentators noted that there were detailed pathological reports following the death of each soldier. Official Israeli figures say 119 Israeli soldiers died in the 2006 fighting

The Israeli military has a staunch tradition of not leaving the bodies of fallen fighters in enemy hands, in keeping with Jewish religion that demands that the dead be laid to rest in their entirety, in so far as that is possible.

Russia: could use nuclear weapons

MOSCOW (AP)—Russia's military chief of staff said Saturday that Moscow could use nuclear weapons in preventive strikes to protect itself and its allies, the latest aggressive remarks from increasingly assertive Russian authorities.

Gen. Yuri Baluyevsky's comment did not mark a policy shift, military analysts said. Amid disputes with the West over security issues, it may have been meant as a warning that Russia is prepared to use its nuclear might.

"We do not intend to attack anyone, but we consider it necessary for all our partners in the world community to clearly understand ... that to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Russia and its allies, military forces will be used, including preventively, including with the use of nuclear weapons," Baluyevsky said at a military conference in a remark broadcast on state-run cable channel Vesti-24.

According to the state-run news agency RIA-Novosti, Baluyevsky added that Russia would use nuclear weapons and carry out preventive strikes only in accordance with Russia's military doctrine.

The military doctrine adopted in 2000 says Russia may use nuclear weapons to counter a nuclear attack on Russia or an ally, or a large-scale conventional attack that poses a critical risk to Russia's security.

Retired Gen. Vladimir Dvorkin, formerly a top arms control expert with the Russian Defense Ministry, said he saw "nothing new" in Baluyevsky's statement. "He was restating the doctrine in his own words," Dvorkin said.

Nuclear revival rekindles waste concerns

BEAUMONT-HAGUE, France (AP)—Thousands of canisters of highly radioactive waste from the world's most nuclear-energized nation lie, silent and deadly, beneath this jutting tip of Normandy. Above ground, cows graze and Atlantic waves crash into heather-covered hills.

The spent fuel, vitrified into blocks of black glass that will remain dangerous for thousands of years, is in "interim storage." Like nearly all the world's nuclear waste, it is still waiting for the long-term disposal solution that has eluded scientists and governments in the six decades since the atomic era began.

Industry officials hope renewed worldwide interest in nuclear energy will break a long, awkward silence surrounding nuclear waste. They want to revive momentum for scientific and political breakthroughs on waste that stalled after the accidents at Three Mile Island in 1979 and Chernobyl in 1986, which raised worldwide fears about radioactivity's risks to human and planetary health.

So far, though, recent talk of a nuclear renaissance has focused on the "front end," or reactor construction. Engineers are designing the next generation of reactors to be safer than today's—and they're being billed as a solution to global warming. Nuclear reactors do not emit carbon dioxide, blamed for heating the planet.

WORLD BRIEFS

Israeli airstrike kills 2 Gaza militants

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP)—Israeli aircraft killed two Hamas militants in Gaza fighting early Saturday and Palestinians lobbed three rockets into Israel, a day after Israel sealed the borders and bombed an empty Hamas building. Despite intense fighting in the region over the past four days, rocket fire appeared to ease Saturday. A day earlier, 16 rockets hit southern Israel. A spokesman for Hamas militants in Gaza, using the nom de guerre Abu Obeida, would not link Saturday's reduction in fire to Israeli strikes or new sanctions introduced Friday and said the tempo could be increased again at any time. "Sometimes our tactic is to increase fire, sometimes to hold back," he said. "It needs a few days to show." On Tuesday, an Israeli ground and air offensive against rocket squads claimed the lives of 19 Palestinians. Since then a total of 36 Gazans have been killed, among them at least 10 civilians.

Kenya opposition calls new rallies

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—Kenya's opposition party, determined to bring down President Mwai Kibaki's government, called Saturday for another day of "peaceful rallies" despite the deaths of more than 20 people in this week's demonstrations. Police took forceful action at rallies Wednesday through Friday protesting the Dec. 27 presidential election, but opposition party chairman Henry Kosgey told reporters "we will use each and every means to bring down Kibaki's government." Kosgey called for more rallies on Thursday, in defiance of a government ban and to the disapproval of the European Union. "Mass meetings ... can lead to violence," EU Development Commissioner Louis Michel said, after holding what he called "positive" meetings with both Kibaki and opposition leader Raila Odinga. He said both sides "appeal to end the violence," and agreed to recognize mediation efforts by former U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

Polish town leery of US missile defense

REDZIKOWO, Poland (AP)—Among the people living around this disused Polish air base, there is little enthusiasm for the missile interceptor station likely to be built here as part of a U.S. missile defense system. Poland's new government is sounding increasingly skeptical about the plan, arguing that it won't boost Polish security, and that sentiment is echoed throughout this farming region near the Baltic Sea coast. The main fear is that the area will become a target for retaliation by Russia, which vigorously opposes President Bush's plan. "If they build the missile defense base here, it'll be a magnet and the first place the Russians will shoot their missiles," said Tadeusz Krajnik, a 55-year-old retired air force technician who lives in one of the brightly colored Communist-era apartment blocs next to the base.

Health & Fitness

YMCA tackles America's health crisis

AP

Kathryn Cahill practices yoga with her 4 month old son Jack Cahill during the "Mom and Baby" yoga class at the Park Slope YMCA Thursday, Jan. 10, 2008 in the Brooklyn borough of New York. the Y is once again redefining itself.

By DAVID CRARY
AP NATIONAL WRITER

NEW YORK (AP) — Founded in the mid-19th century, the Young Men's Christian Association has expanded far beyond its name in the United States. It welcomes all faiths, half the 20.2 million people it serves are female, and more than half are adults.

With that diverse clientele in mind, the Y is again redefining itself. A new strategic plan envisions the organization as America's paramount fitness and anti-obesity crusader, combatting what it calls "the nation's ongoing lifestyle health crisis."

While maintaining its varied youth programs and vast child-care network, the Y is aggressively expanding health-related initiatives, notably through a program called Activate America.

At hundreds of local Ys nationwide, officials are retraining staff, redesigning facilities and revising activities to better serve the millions of Americans who find it hard to stick with weight-loss and fitness regimens.

"Our history has been one of taking a lead on key issues facing our society," said Neil Nicoll, who since May 2006 has been president of the YMCA of the USA—the parent group that coordinates activities of the 967 independently run YMCA associations across the country.

Founded in Britain in 1844 by Christian evangelicals, the YMCA opened its first U.S. branch in Boston in 1851 and soon adopted as a goal "the improvement of the spiritual, mental, social and physical condition of young men."

It established hotel-like residence halls, organized summer camps, and oversaw the invention of volleyball and basketball. During both world wars, it deployed thousands of volunteers to provide services for U.S. troops and war prisoners.

One by one, barriers to participation fell - women and non-Christians were welcomed, and in the 1960s the Y greatly expanded inner-city operations. By the 1980s, it was embracing the fitness boom, and building many new facilities.

Now, more than 370 of its associations already have joined Activate America, which Nicoll said is targeted at the 40 percent of Americans who crave a healthier lifestyle but waver in their pursuit of it.

"A lot of our population doesn't respond to what your gym teacher told you," he said.

"They're looking for personal support, done in a more holistic way. We want programs geared to group activity so people can develop connections instead of just running in and out."

One example: the YMCA of Greater New York in September began offering a 12-week, personalized exercise program—free to members—that includes four individual sessions with a fitness coach.

In Anderson, S.C., the Y is holding monthly weigh-ins as part of a communal weight-loss drive. Other Ys are reassessing the nutritional value of food offered in their vending machines and at their child-care centers.

Karen Leslie, CEO of YMCA of Greater Providence in Rhode Island, said the initiative means her nine-branch association will focus less on gung-ho fitness buffs and more on those who struggle to achieve good health.

"We have to retrain our staff so they will actively listen to what the needs are," Leslie said. "We want to move away from prescribing what we believe individuals need."

In a related effort, Pioneering Healthier Communities, the Y is working with other civic groups in more than 110 cities and towns to combat obesity, poor nutrition and physical inactivity community-wide.

"When the YMCA looked at a changing America, what they saw was a lifestyle that was getting out of control," said Wes Alles, a Stanford University School of Medicine researcher who has helped design the Y's initiatives.

David MacLeod, a Central Michigan University historian who has studied American nonprofits and youth groups, said the new health initiative might baffle some of the Y's 19th century founders but suggested it fit with a long tradition of change.

"The YMCA is an excellent case study of adaptation and survival," he said. "They have a history of openness to new ideas."

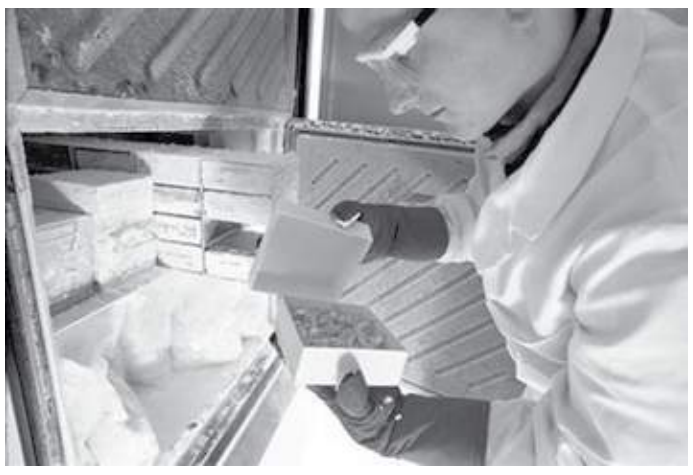
That may help explain its steady growth. Its revenue of $5.7 billion in 2006—from donations, government support and user fees—was topped only by the American Red Cross among U.S. nonprofits.

Many Y participants benefit from financial assistance, and even full membership fees usually are less than commercial health clubs. Yet a survey of 10,000 gym users, just released by the independent watchdog group Consumer Reports, found that health facilities at Y's and other nonprofit centers were generally better rated than big health-club chains.

Overall, the Y hopes to expand its clientele by 25 percent, to 25 million, within four years. Yet though its full, formal name no longer describes the YMCA's mission or participants, there's no serious thought of changing it.

"The name 'YMCA' is so widely recognized across the country - it's up there with Coca-Cola and IBM as a symbol and a name," Nicoll said. "But we continually need to work to help people understand how much broader we are than that name."

FDA weighs over-counter cholesterol drug



AP

In this undated photo released by German drug maker Merck & Co., an employee controls samples in the molecular biology department.

WASHINGTON (AP)—The government is questioning if too many of the wrong people will take cholesterol-lowering Mevacor if it's sold without a prescription, days before Merck & Co. makes its third try to move the drug over the counter.

Merck says selling a low dose of this long-used medication on drugstore shelves, next to the aspirin, could get millions of people at moderate risk of heart disease important treatment that they otherwise may miss.

A preliminary Food and Drug Administration review released Tuesday agreed that nonprescription Mevacor would be "a reasonably safe and effective" option—if consumers used it as directed.

But when Merck tested if consumers could judge who was a proper Mevacor candidate, only 20 percent answered all the questions completely correctly—50 percent if researchers counted people who said they'd check some things with their doctor before purchasing, concluded FDA's lead medical reviewer.

Moreover, about 30 percent of people who already were diagnosed with heart disease, diabetes or had had a stroke wanted to purchase over-the-counter Mevacor, people who need a doctor's care, the FDA documents say.

The studies "have not convinced this reviewer that there is adequate consumer comprehension of the proposed product label to ensure safe and effective use of this product," the preliminary assessment concluded.

Merck argues that most people made the right decision on whether they should buy OTC Mevacor even if they missed some answers.

On Thursday, Merck will present its case to the FDA's independent scientific advisers, hoping they will recommend that Mevacor become the first in the family of cholesterol-lowering "statin" drugs to be sold in this country without a prescription. Twice before, FDA has said no.

Many parents can't see child's obesity

By SANDRA G. BOODMAN
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

"Fat? Not my kid!" That reaction, according to researchers at the University of Michigan's C.S. Mott Children's Hospital, was common among more than 2,000 parents surveyed this year as part of the National Poll on Children's Health.

The problem was that 40 percent of youths ages 6 to 11 whose parents described them as "about the right weight" were actually obese.

Fewer than 10 percent of parents whose children were obese said they were "very concerned" about their child's weight. Overall, 25 percent of children whose parents were polled were classified as overweight or obese.

Researchers led by physician Matthew M. Davis found other disparities as well: Forty-one percent of African Americans said they were very concerned about their children's obesity, compared with 30 percent of whites and 17 percent of Hispanics. Parental concern about a child's obesity was lowest in the Midwest (13 percent) and highest in the Northeast (37 percent).

Experts say the study underscores the disconnect between public awareness of childhood obesity as a public health problem and the ability to recognize it in one's children. In recent years some pediatricians have called on doctors to take a more direct approach with parents in addressing the issue, which some physicians have avoided mentioning because they feared offending families.

FDA approves HIV drug etravirine

WASHINGTON (AP)—Tablets of the drug etravirine were approved Friday by the Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of HIV infection in adults who have failed treatment with other antiretrovirals.

Sold under the trade name Intelence, etravirine is a non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor, or NNRTI, that helps to block an enzyme that the human immunodeficiency virus needs to multiply, the FDA said. It was approved for use in combination with other anti-HIV medications.

Etravirine can reduce the amount of HIV in the blood and increase white blood cells that help fight off other infections, the FDA said. It also may reduce the risk of death or infections that can occur with a weakened immune system.

The government gave etravirine a priority review, a status granted to medications aimed at treating serious or life-threatening conditions. Tibotec Pharmaceuticals Ltd., a unit of Johnson & Johnson, said last July that it had requested etravirine be placed on a fast track for review.

"This is another significant new product for many HIV-infected patients who are NNRTI-resistant and whose infections are not responding to currently available medications," said Dr. Debra B. Birnkrant, director of the FDA's Division of Antiviral Products.

The drug is distributed by Tibotec Therapeutics, a division of Ortho Biotech Products, L.P., a Johnson & Johnson company based in Bridgewater, N.J.

Life & Style

Writers' strike threatens Grammys show

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Producers of the Grammy Awards have requested an interim agreement that would allow striking Hollywood writers to work on next month's telecast, The Recording Academy said Tuesday.

Writers Guild of America spokesman Gregg Mitchell said the request was referred to the board of the union's West Coast branch for a decision. He said earlier in the day, however, that a deal "is unlikely to be granted."

The situation raised question about the fate of the Feb. 10 Grammys ceremony, set for live broadcast by CBS.

The writers guild refused to grant a waiver for last weekend's Golden Globe Awards and threatened to picket that event. Actors were advised by their union to stay away from the ceremony, prompting Globes organizers to replace the normally glitzy telecast with a scaled-down news conference lacking stars, glamour and ad revenue.

Next month's Academy Awards could face the same fate.

The Recording Academy said it remained hopeful that there would be a quick and positive response to its request involving the 50th annual Grammy Awards show.

"We will take whatever action is necessary to ensure that a program so vital to our industry, artists, charitable beneficiaries, and the great city of Los Angeles is held as planned," said the statement by Neil Portnow, president and chief executive of The Recording Academy, which owns all rights to the Grammy telecast but does not produce the show.

The academy said it supports efforts by Cossette Productions, which produces the Grammys, to reach an interim agreement with writers such as the one previously made with Worldwide Pants, which makes David Letterman's late-night show.

Earlier in the day, the guild said it would allow its members to work on the NAACP Image Awards and would not picket the Feb. 14 show at the Shrine Auditorium.

The awards presented by the National association for the Advancement of Colored People honor those who promote diversity in the arts. Awards in 44 categories, including movies, TV and literature, will be presented in the ceremony broadcast live on Fox.

"Because of the historic role the NAACP has played in struggles like ours, we think this decision is appropriate to jointly achieve our goals," guild leader Patric Verrone said at a news conference.

AP

Singer Jill Scott makes an appearance on BET's "106 & Park" show at BET Studios in New York, in this Oct. 11, 2007 file photo.

The writers guild said it had not yet decided whether to picket the upcoming Grammys ceremony.

Screen Actors Guild spokeswoman Pamela Greenwalt said her union's members "have been unwilling to cross a picket line and we anticipate that solidarity will continue."

In a joint statement, the American Federation of Musicians and American Federation of Television and Radio Artists stressed that events surrounding the telecast of the Grammys help fund educational, charitable and advocacy activities of The Recording Academy.

The statement urged members to participate in Grammy events but also "express support for our ongoing efforts to ensure that musical artists and creative talent receive fair compensation for their work in digital media."

Members were also encouraged to show support for writers.

The American Federation of Musicians represents performers at the Grammys as well as many of the recording artists honored. Other participants are members of the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists.

In a separate development, production and distribution company Spyglass Entertainment reached an interim deal with the writers guild allowing Spyglass to resume production, company co-chairman Gary Barber said.

Barber would not disclose further details. Mitchell, who represents the guild, said he could not confirm the agreement.

The writers guild previously struck deals with Worldwide Pants, United Artists, The Weinstein Co. and independent studio Media Rights Capital.

Meanwhile, four major studios said they had canceled dozens of writers' contracts in a possible concession that the current television season cannot be saved, the Los Angeles Times reported.

The deals were terminated by 20th Century Fox Television, CBS Paramount Network Television, NBC Universal and Warner Bros.

Writers talks could resume next week

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Striking Hollywood writers could begin informal talks with studio chiefs as early as next week in an effort to end a two-month walkout that has hobbled the entertainment industry, according to a person familiar with the bargaining strategy of the writers union.

Word of the possible break in the stalemate came Friday, a day after the Directors Guild of America announced a tentative contract deal, and studio heads urged the Writers Guild of America to join in talks that could lead to the resumption of formal negotiations that broke off Dec. 7.

The Writers Guild is prepared to sit down with executives such as Robert Iger, CEO of The Walt Disney Co., who participated in similar informal talks with directors, said the person who was not authorized to publicly comment and asked for anonymity.

The Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers, which represents studios, said it had no comment on the possible start of informal talks.

In its tentative deal with producers, the Directors Guild resolved new-media compensation issues that are also central to the Writers Guild dispute, including compensation for movie and TV projects delivered over the Internet.

In a joint statement Thursday, top executives from eight major companies, including Fox, Paramount Pictures, The Walt Disney Co., CBS Corp., Sony Pictures Entertainment, Warner Bros., MGM and NBC Universal called on the Writers Guild to join in the kind of informal talks that preceded the directors' negotiations.

The executives said the deal with directors established a precedent for the industry's creative talent to "participate financially in every emerging area of new media."

Officials at the Writers Guild were waiting to receive a copy of the directors' tentative pact and evaluate how it fits in with what writers are seeking.

The agreement gives the directors union jurisdiction over programs produced for distribution on the Internet. It also provides for residuals paid on a percentage of distributors' gross—also a key Writers Guild proposal.

"I think the DGA deal is good. Very good. For writers, for directors, for the future," writer-producer John Wells, whose credits include "ER" and "The West Wing," said in a letter posted online.

Some out-of-work writers said they were heartened by the directors' pact. But they tempered their optimism about a possible end to the walkout by writers, which has halted work on dozens of TV shows, has disrupted movie production, turned the usually star-studded Golden Globes show into a mundane news conference and has threatened the upcoming Academy Awards ceremony.

AP

Striking film and television writers picket outside Warner Brothers Studios, Monday, Jan. 14, 2008, in Burbank, Calif.

Screenwriter David Garrett said new-media elements of the directors' deal appeared to reflect at least some of what the Writers Guild is seeking.

"I think it's important the producers have acknowledged the unions need jurisdiction over the Internet," Garrett said. "There can't be any argument about that when they come back (to talks) with the Writers Guild. Then the amounts can be negotiated."

The deal might jump-start formal negotiations, writer Steven L. Sears said.

"Everybody is hoping it's a great deal and will help bring the producers back to the table," he said as he walked a picket line with about 40 other people outside NBC studios in Burbank.

Still, he said the majority of Directors Guild members don't face the same contract issues that are key for writers.

Negotiations broke down after the studio alliance demanded the Writers Guild take unionization of reality and animation shows and other issues off the table.

In Utah, Robert Redford told The Associated Press that an agreement between studios and writers could be imminent.

"Once you see one element of the talent side settling, it's only a question of time before it will all fall in that direction, so I would imagine that it's a sign that the strike won't last too long," Redford said at his Sundance Film Festival.

Meanwhile, a fund to help workers who are not part of the Writers Guild but face financial hardship because of the strike has been established, the guild said. The fund will provide emergency assistance for food, housing and other expenses.

Paris designers breathe new life into men's suits

PARIS (AP)—Paris menswear designers set their sights on the youth market Friday, with vibrant collections that breathed new life into that perennial wardrobe staple—the two-piece suit.

Once the preserve of investment bankers and CEOs, suits have found increasing favor with younger men looking to shed their cargo pants and hooded tops.

But forget the stuffy shirt and tie. Today's customer is just as likely to throw his impeccably tailored jacket over a loosely buttoned T-shirt and to top it off with an oversized scarf.

At French label Sonia Rykiel, a body-skimming gray pinstriped suit was jazzed up with a black-and-white leopard-print shirt and a V-neck sweater in kingfisher blue.

A burgundy plaid jacket was deliberately mismatched with midnight blue velvet pants, while fuzzy wool overcoats reflected this season's trend for elaborate textures.

"I don't see why men should have a very strict rapport with fashion," said Nathalie Rykiel, the president and creative director of the label founded by her mother.

"Mixing and matching is not just for women. To a certain extent, it's a question of taste and education, but as long as you know what you're doing, practically anything is possible," she told The Associated Press.

British designer John Galliano took the concept one step further with his parade of medieval princes, jesters and executioners decked out in drop-crotched britches and swaggering coats tufted with fur.

AP

A model wears a creation by Armenian fashion designer Veronique Nichanian for Hermes as part of her men's fall/winter 2008-2009 fashion collection presented in Paris, Saturday, Jan. 19, 2008.

AP

A model wears a creation by Dutch fashion designer Jeroen Van Tuyl as part of his men's fall/winter 2008-2009 fashion collection presented in Paris, Saturday, Jan. 19, 2008.

AP

A model wears a creation by Dutch fashion designer Jeroen Van Tuyl as part of his men's fall/winter 2008-2009 fashion collection presented in Paris, Saturday, Jan. 19, 2008.

Looking battered and bloody, his models stomped down a catwalk shrouded in dry ice fog wearing outfits that owed as much to historical figures like King Henry VIII as they did to contemporary street style.

The designer is famous for staging over-the-top displays and saving his commercial savvy for the shop floor, but it was hard to pick out the wearable elements in this show.

By the time a model posed in a jockstrap, an executioner's hood and a thick rope wound around his neck, Galliano had definitely crossed the line of bad taste.

French label Kenzo stayed true to its tradition of melding East and West with a short but sweet collection inspired by Thomas Blake Glover, a 19th century Scottish merchant who traveled to Japan.

The outfits, showcased on a revolving catwalk with moving backdrops and fake snow, told a compelling story. But the casual suits worn with beanie hats and the sturdy fly fishing coats firmly anchored the tale in everyday life.

A final sequence of black Mao-collared jackets featured removable panels of gold embroidery inspired by the battle armor of Samurai warriors.

It seemed a sensible compromise in a season overshadowed by fears of a U.S. recession, rising energy prices, the subprime mortgage crisis and a weak dollar.

"We're obviously seeing a lot of suits at the moment in these collections because people are hoping to show stuff that will definitely sell, in what everyone says is going to be a difficult year for retail," said Charlie Porter, associate editor of the British edition of GQ magazine.

Dutch fashion shops open in ex-brothels

AP

A prostitute is seen next to one of 16 new fashion studios, right, in Amsterdam, Netherlands, Saturday Jan. 19, 2008

AMSTERDAM, Netherlands (AP)—Instead of selling sex, Amsterdam is trying to sell sexy.

The city unveiled its "Red Light Fashion" project on Saturday, having converted 16 buildings that used to house prostitutes in the city's ancient red light district into studios for young fashion designers.

The idea was born out of the government's desire to crack down on crime in the area. But many neighbors are displeased with the high-class newcomers in an area that thrives on its seedy reputation, and even the designers say they are taking a risk.

"I'm very curious whether my clients will come here," said Jan Taminiau, one of 10 up-and-coming designers awarded space on the Oudezijds Voorburgwal, a central street in the red light district.

"I'm sure that some people will be hesitant ... but I think most of the clients that I have—I only make made-to-measure—they'll think it's fun to come here."

Amsterdam politicians are convinced that radical change is needed in the red light district, and are spending lavishly to bring it about.

The area has been a center of prostitution since Amsterdam's golden age in the 1600s. After World War II, it became a major tourist attraction, along with coffee shops where marijuana is sold openly.

Although prostitution was formally legalized in 2001, the industry remains rife with corruption, from businessmen who own the buildings using them to launder money, to criminal gangs and pimps exploiting the women working there, to petty crime caused by dealers and junkies that frequent the area.

The city paid $40 million to buy the 16 buildings from a businessman last year. Altogether they housed about a third of the windows where prostitutes beckon to customers and take them into a small adjoining room for sex.

The designers are living rent-free in the studios for the first year.

"It's time to attack criminality much harder and much more effectively than we've been able to do in the past years," the vice-mayor, Lodewijk Asscher, said Saturday at a champagne ceremony marking the reopening of the buildings.

After his speech, crowds of journalists, fashion models, designers and others set out into the narrow streets of the red light district to look at the results of the revamp.

Many prostitutes are illegal immigrants or have families that do not know what they do. Several were visibly angered at seeing camera crews in what is normally strictly a no-photo zone, making obscene gestures or yanking their curtains shut.

Jan Broers, who owns Royal Taste hotel and pub directly across the street, and operates several of the remaining prostitution windows, said it was unfair to force some businesses to undergo heavy financial vetting while others are given space rent-free.

And the idea of mixing fashion with prostitution was poorly thought out, he said: Clothes are sold during the day, while the district mostly comes alive at night. And there is not much overlap in cus-

AP

An unidentified woman, part of a group that toured the red light district's new fashion studios, passes the window of a prostitute, left, adjacent to one of the studios, in Amsterdam, Netherlands, Saturday Jan. 19, 2008.

Mystery man's annual visit to Poe grave

AP

Jeff Jerome, curator of the Poe House and Museum, walks away from original grave of Edgar Allen Poe with a bottle of cognac and roses left by a mysterious visitor, Saturday, Jan. 19, 2008, in Baltimore.

BALTIMORE (AP)—Undeterred by controversy, a mysterious visitor paid his annual tribute at the grave of Edgar Allan Poe early Saturday, placing three red roses and a half-filled bottle of cognac before stealing away into the darkness.

Nearly 150 people had gathered outside the cemetery of Westminster Presbyterian Church, but the man known as the "Poe toaster" was, as usual, able to avoid being spotted by the crowd, said Jeff Jerome, curator of the Poe House and Museum.

The tribute takes place every Jan. 19 - the anniversary of Poe's birth.

The visitor did not leave a note, Jerome said, electing not to respond to questions raised in the past year about the history and authenticity of the tribute.

Sam Porpora, a former church historian who led the fight to preserve the cemetery, claimed last summer that he cooked up the idea of the Poe toaster in the 1970s as a publicity stunt.

"We did it, myself and my tour guides," Porpora, a former advertising executive, said in August. "It was a promotional idea."

Porpora said someone else has since "become" the Poe toaster.

Jerome disputes Porpora's claims and says the tribute began in 1949 at the latest, pointing to a 1950 article in The (Baltimore) Evening Sun that mentions "an anonymous citizen who creeps in annually to place an empty bottle (of excellent label)" against the gravestone.

Jerome invites a handful of Poe enthusiasts to join him inside the church every year but withholds details of the tribute in an effort to help the toaster maintain his anonymity. He said the visitor no longer wears the wide-brimmed hat and scarf he donned in the past.

In 1993, the visitor left a note reading, "The torch will be passed." A later note said the man, who apparently died in 1998, had handed the tradition on to his two sons.

This year's visitor was the same man who has come to the grave site many times in the past, Jerome said.

"We recognize him from his build, the way he walks," he said. "It would be very easy for us, visually, to see if this were a different person."

Poe, who wrote poems and horror stories including "The Raven" and "The Telltale Heart," died Oct. 7, 1849, in Baltimore at the age of 40 after collapsing in a tavern. Next year will be the 200th anniversary of his birth.

28 people arrested in trashing of poet's house

NEW HAVEN, Vt. (AP)—Twenty-eight people are accused of attending a birthday party and New Year's celebration that left a farm house where poet Robert Frost once spent his summers in tatters.

They were all charged with trespassing and five of them with unlawful mischief—both misdemeanors—stemming from the Dec. 28 party at the Homer Noble Farm house, authorities said.

The farm house had broken windows, broken antique furniture and tables burned in a fireplace. Vomit and urine stained the carpeting and beer cans, cups and drug paraphernalia were left behind.

The damage was estimated at $10,600. Witnesses said marijuana was used, but no drug charges were filed for lack of evidence, Vermont State Police Sgt. Lee Hodsden said.

The destruction apparently began when a broken chair was thrown into a fireplace being used to heat the building, a furnished residence used in the summer by Middlebury's Bread Loaf writer's program, Hodsden said.

A cabin on the property where Frost is said to have done some of his writing was untouched.

Lisa Boudah, Middlebury's public safety director, said officials are reviewing plans to beef up security.

Frost, the author of "The Road Not Taken" and "The Gift Outright," summered at the site for more than 20 years before his death in 1963.

AP

Leo Hotte, Middlebury College's Breadloaf Campus Manager, shows an antique chair in this Dec. 31, 2007, file photo, which was part of the damage wrought by trespassing party-goers who ransacked the Homer Noble Farm, a former Robert Frost residence, that's now a historic landmark in Ripton, Vt.

Borat' star wins Ala. case over movie

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP)—Borat to the Alabama Supreme Court: High fives!

The nine-member court sided with British comedian Sacha Baron Cohen on Friday in a lawsuit filed by etiquette teacher Kathie Martin, who unwittingly appeared in his hit movie "Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan."

The justices overruled a lower court and said Martin can't sue Cohen and the companies that produced the movie in Alabama because she signed an agreement stating only courts in New York could hear any disputes that arose from her appearance.

Martin did not immediately return a message seeking comment. Neither did a spokesman for Twentieth Century Fox Film Corp., which distributed the movie and was sued by Martin.

Several other people who appeared in the 2006 movie have filed suit claiming they were duped into appearing in the comedy, which grossed more than $200 million.

In the movie, Cohen plays a journalist from Kazakhstan traveling across the United States in search of Pamela Anderson. He gives out random high fives and says "Very nice!" all along the way, misunderstanding American culture at every stop.

During a segment in Alabama, Borat sought etiquette lessons from Martin and is shown in the movie presenting guests at a dinner party with a bag of human feces.

The Supreme Court was polite enough not to go into details of the dinner: "It is sufficient to say that an eventful meal ensued during which the alleged reporter engaged in behavior that would generally be considered boorish and offensive," wrote Justice Mike Bolin.

Martin sued Cohen, Twentieth Century, One America Productions Inc., Everyman Pictures, Dune Entertainment, MTV Networks, Comedy Central, Dakota North Entertainment Inc. and Four by Two Production Co., claiming she was embarrassed and humiliated by her encounter with Borat.

A lower court sided with Martin in April and let the case go forward. But the Supreme Court ruled that the agreement Martin signed specifying New York as the site for any disputes meant Alabama courts could not hear the case.

The justices sent the case back to a Jefferson County judge.

Others who have filed suit over the movie include South Carolina fraternity members, a Maryland driving instructor, Romanian villagers and a businessman who was shown fleeing from a hug from Cohen in New York.

Recording Academy circulates petition

NEW YORK (AP)—The Recording Academy has asked its members to sign a petition urging the Writers Guild of America to accept an agreement that would grant a waiver for writers to work on the upcoming Grammys, The Associated Press has learned.

The fate of the Feb. 10 telecast is in doubt after the WGA announced that it was unlikely to grant a waiver for music's biggest night. If a waiver is not granted, its members could picket the event, set to be broadcast live by CBS.

The online petition reads in part: "As a member of The Recording Academy, I would like to express my strong support for the Grammy Awards, and to encourage the WGA to accept the interim agreement offered by the producers of the Grammys. ... During this important 50th anniversary year, I support the Grammys and strongly urge the guild to do the same."

The message also refers to the academy's charitable and educational events and the fact that it employs hundreds of union members in the annual telecast.

The link to the online petition was sent in an e-mail message Thursday from Recording Academy President Neil Portnow and producer Jimmy Jam, who's the chairman of its board of trustees.

A WGA representative reiterated the group's earlier decision, that no final decision had been made. A Recording Academy representative did not have an immediate comment on the petition.

The Golden Globe awards, normally a glitzy, three-hour star-studded extravaganza, was reduced to a starless news conference Sunday when the Screen Actors Guild urged their members to boycott the event. The Academy Awards may face the same predicament Feb. 24.

The Recording Academy has said it hopes an agreement can be reached, though the WGA has said that is unlikely.

On Thursday, the manager for Beyonce said the star, also a member of the actor's guild, plans to perform at the Grammys, as do the Foo Fighters. However, neither act said whether they would cross a picket line if it came to that.

In a statement this week, Portnow said Grammy preparations remain "in full swing."

"We will take whatever action is necessary to ensure that a program so vital to our industry, artists, charitable beneficiaries and the great city of Los Angeles is held as planned," he said.

Nigerian militants invite Clooney

LAGOS, Nigeria (AP)—Militants in Nigeria's restive oil region on Saturday invited actor and peace activist George Clooney to visit the area and asked for U.N. intervention in their conflict.

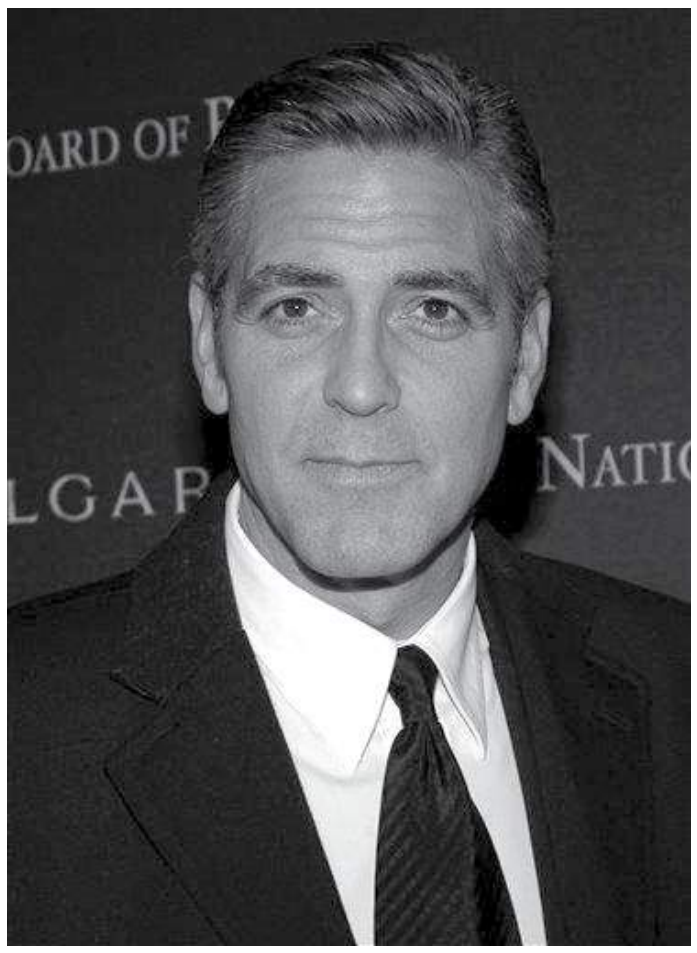
U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon designated Clooney as a U.N. "messenger of peace" Friday to promote the world body's activities, especially in its far-flung peacekeeping missions. The 46-year-old actor has been campaigning for an end to the 4 1/2-year war in Darfur and for humanitarian aid for the millions caught up in the conflict.

Nigeria's Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta congratulated Clooney on his appointment and invited him to visit their impoverished region, which has been wracked by two years of fighting, bombings and kidnapping of foreign workers.

"Mr. Clooney, MEND extends an invitation to you to see things for yourself and is willing to work with you and other credible peace makers of international repute to stop Nigeria from plunging into the abyss of war," the group said in a statement e-mailed to reporters.

It said the unrest in the region was building up to a crisis that would dwarf Darfur's.

Clooney was not immediately available for comment.



AP

George Clooney arrives at the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures awards gala in New York in this Jan. 15, 2008 file photo.

The group asked for the United Nations to take a role—which it did not specify—in the conflict.

"We suggest that the U.N. should take a proactive step to nip the Niger Delta unrest in the bud before it is too late. Your role as a Messenger of Peace makes it imperative to consider the Niger Delta as a potential time bomb waiting to explode for which urgent steps must be taken."

The call for foreign intervention was unusual, as the militant group has so far used Africa's biggest oil industry as a leverage point to pressure Nigeria's government to meet its demands.

Those include more oil revenue for the region, and the release from prison of some of the group's top leaders. Attacks since early 2006 have cut Nigeria's oil production by about one quarter, helping send oil prices to historic highs.

Nearly 200 foreign workers have been kidnapped in the region in the past two years; they normally are released unharmed after a ransom is paid.

The militants have offered a unilateral truce if one of their leaders is released from prison in Angola, where he is being held on arms-smuggling charges. The group said Saturday the man was sick and they asked for an international envoy to visit him in prison.

While many U.N. agencies have goodwill ambassadors to promote activities ranging from helping children and refugees to promoting human rights, "messengers of peace" are selected by the secretary-general to promote the broader work of the United Nations.

Clooney will receive his designation at U.N. headquarters Jan. 31.

Police call Sutherland a good inmate

GLENDALE, Calif. (AP)—Kiefer Sutherland, who plays the hard-as-nails agent of TV's "24," was a softy during his 48 days in jail on a drunken-driving charge.

Sutherland, scheduled to be released Monday, has spent his sentence cleaning sheets, pillowcases and blankets on laundry duty, police Officer John Balian said Friday.

"He was very humble, never complained," Balian said. "He didn't give us any problems at all."

Sutherland, 41, pleaded no contest in October to driving with a blood-alcohol level above the legal limit of 0.08 percent. He was sentenced to 30 days, as well as 18 days for violating probation stemming from a 2004 drunken-driving arrest.

After entering his plea last fall, Sutherland issued a statement saying he was "very disappointed in myself for the poor judgment I exhibited recently, and I'm deeply sorry for the disappointment and distress this has caused my family, friends and co-workers."

He was granted a request to serve his time in suburban Glendale's city jail rather than in the overcrowded downtown Los Angeles County jail. The trade-off was that he could not shave any time off his sentence for good behavior or early release because of overcrowding.

Sutherland was convicted of alcohol-related reckless driving in 1993.

He was in the same jail as 69-year-old actor Gary Collins, who was released Friday after completing a four-day sentence for drunken driving.

Collins, who also chose to stay in Glendale instead of the Los Angeles County jail, was also a good prisoner, Balian said, and "there were no problems" during his stay.

AP

Kiefer Sutherland arrives at a party in Los Angeles in this Sept. 24, 2007 file photo.

Witnesses back 'Diddy' assault assertion

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Four eyewitnesses support a man's assertion that Sean "Diddy" Combs assaulted him and his girlfriend at a post-Oscar party at a Hollywood nightclub last year, according to court papers filed by the plaintiff's attorney.

Marianna Ruiz, one of the witnesses deposed by an attorney for Gerard Rechnitzer, said in papers filed Wednesday that the rap and fashion mogul struck Rechnitzer unprovoked.

"I just kind of remember seeing him go flying, not flying as in like feet off the ground, but he went back significantly," said Ruiz, who was part of a group at the club with the Rechnitzer. "I was just in shock that somebody would ... just kind of strike somebody out of nowhere."

Another witness, Michael Sherman, said "all of a sudden, he hit him. And there was a taxi behind Gerard. Gerard got knocked into the taxi."

Sherman said Combs then tried to spit on Ruiz, who was standing nearby.

Rechnitzer seeks unspecified damages in the suit filed in Los Angeles Superior Court last year. He claims the assault occurred in the early hours of Feb. 25 outside Teddy's at the Roosevelt Hotel.

AP

Sean 'P. Diddy' Combs arrives at the 15th annual Elton John AIDS Foundation viewing party to celebrate the 79th Academy Awards, in this Feb. 25, 2007 file photo in Los Angeles.

Suzanne Pleshette dies in Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Suzanne Pleshette, the beautiful, husky-voiced film and Broadway theater star best known for her role as Bob Newhart's sardonic wife on television's long-running "The Bob Newhart Show," has died, said her attorney Robert Finkelstein. She was 70.

Pleshette, who underwent chemotherapy for lung cancer in 2006, died of respiratory failure Saturday evening at her Los Angeles home, said attorney and family friend Robert Finkelstein. She was 70.

"The Bob Newhart Show, a hit throughout its six-year run, starred comedian Newhart as a Chicago psychiatrist surrounded by eccentric patients. Pleshette provided the voice of reason.

Opening presents brings chaos at children's birthday party

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: My daughter, "Bailey," will be 4 soon, and will be having a birthday party. We have been to a few of Bailey's friends' birthday parties, and present-opening turns into chaos. The birthday child doesn't have a chance to really look at the gifts, other children crowd closer and closer to the present-opener to get a better look, and some children cry about the gifts the birthday child has received while their parents promise to buy them a "better one" on their next outing.

I make sure my daughter is well-behaved when it comes to present-opening, but not all parents seem to feel the need to curb this behavior on the part of their children. Would it be acceptable to wait to open Bailey's presents until after the guests have left?

WANTS TO BE A COURTEOUS HOSTESS

DEAR WANTS TO BE COURTEOUS: Children learn what is acceptable behavior and what is not because their parents take the time to explain to them what is expected, and correct them when they make a mistake. The parents you have described were either too ignorant or too lazy to do their job.

Although some "birthday mommies" provide gift bags or party favors for all the children to unwrap, most people consider the present-opening ritual to be part of the fun of the birthday celebration and expect it.

A better solution would be to hold smaller birthday parties for your daughter so things don't get out of hand. According to the chapter "Table and Party Manners" in "Emily Post's Etiquette": "One guest should be invited for each year of a child's age, plus one."

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My daughter-in-law, "Daisy," is a reckless driver who lives in a large metropolitan area surrounded by expressways. She tailgates, weaves in and out of traffic and passes cars at high speeds, often using her cell phone while driving.

Daisy has had several tickets. Despite this and pleas from my son and others to slow down, nothing has changed. I find this odd, because Daisy is otherwise a responsible person -- an executive with a large company, an excellent mother and a loving wife. However, she appears to have a blind spot about the risks she takes when she's behind the wheel. She justifies her speed as necessary in order to keep up with the demands of her schedule.

She would be grief-stricken if she had an accident that involved anyone, especially her infant daughter who is often in the car. Will the only wake-up call come in the form of a serious accident?

DISTRESSED PAPA IN MAINE

DEAR DISTRESSED PAPA: Probably -- that or a near miss. However, I view your daughter-in-law in a different light than you appear to. A mother who drives aggressively with a child in the car and talking on her cell phone does not strike me as Mother of the Year. Studies have shown that drivers on cell phones are as impaired as those who have been drinking. She's being childish, selfish, foolish and irresponsible and should be ashamed of herself.

■ ■ ■

DEAR READERS: Today we remember Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who was martyred in the cause of civil rights in 1968. His words ring as true today as when he first uttered them: "Along the way of life, someone must have sense enough, and morality enough, to cut off the chain of hate." He was a voice of reason in a time of insanity, silenced too soon.

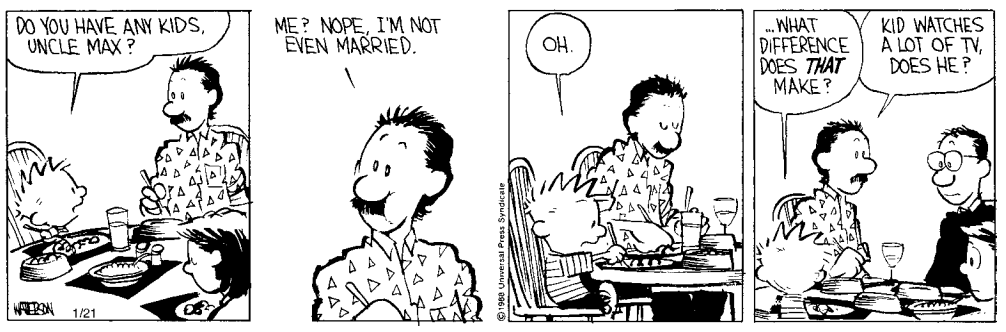
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more attractive person, order "How to Be Popular." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

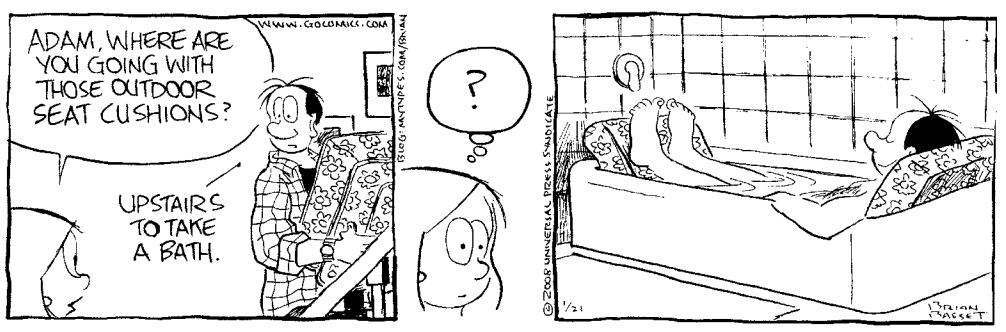

DO YOU HAVE ANY KIDS, UNCLE MAX?
ME? NOPE, I'M NOT EVEN MARRIED.
OH.
...WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES THAT MAKE?
KID WATCHES A LOT OF TV, DOES HE?
WATTERSON 1/21
©1988 Universal Press Syndicate

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

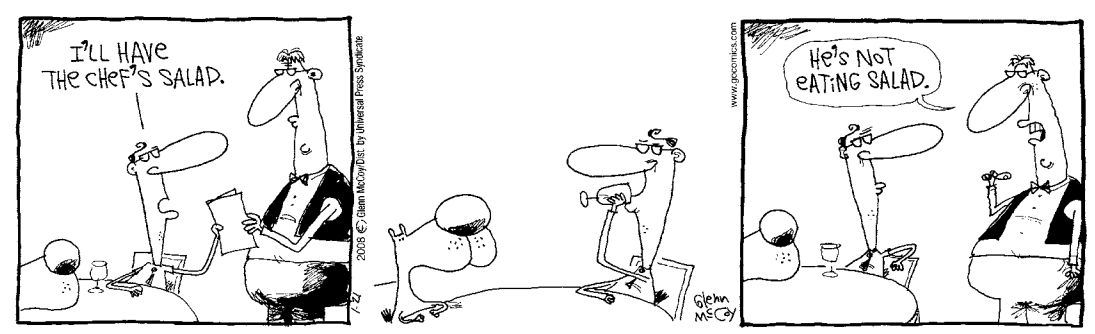
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

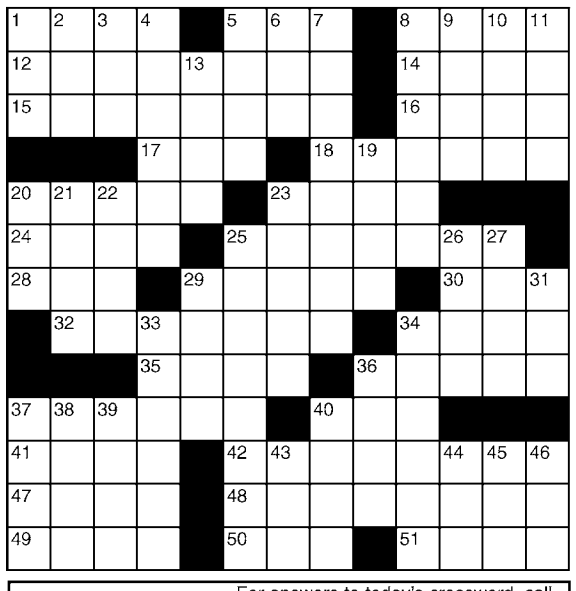
ACROSS
1 Church service
5 8-Down's noise?
8 Gift concealer
12 Skin cream ingredient
14 Count counterpart
15 Menu section
16 Largest of the seven
17 Noah's construction
18 Glide
20 Scale
23 Sotto — (Lat.)
24 Staffer
25 Verbally abused
28 Actor Benicio — Toro
29 Under a bad spell
30 Thee
32 Convey
34 Sensed
35 — out (supplemented)
36 Supermarket division
37 James or Jennifer
40 "It's cold!"
41 Settled down
42 Underlined
47 Sandwich shop
48 On the windward side
49 Vend
50 Depressed
51 Without (Fr.)

DOWN
1 Angry
2 Stout cousin
3 "Mayday!"
4 Big Bird's street
5 Fringe benefit
6 Scrap
7 Nisan commemoration
8 Monkey's pursuer
9 Impetuous
10 "Nessun Dorma" is one
11 Work alternative
13 Predicate word
19 Hydrochloric —
20 Scoundrel
21 Told tales
22 Between jobs
23 Annoyed
25 About-face
26 Spud's buds
27 Barbie, e.g.
29 Forest trek
31 Multipurpose truck
33 Soup legume
34 Gold-medal wins
36 Geographical statistic
37 Wanders
38 Opposite of 48-Across
39 Small stream
40 Create in a cauldron
43 Pair
44 — Na Na
45 Poetic time
46 Hosp. VIPs

Solution time: 24 mins.

G	L	O	P	■	B	Y	T	E	■	T	A	G
L	I	R	A	■	L	A	W	N	■	R	U	E
A	F	A	R	■	A	L	O	E	■	U	R	N
D	E	L	I	■	M	E	W	■	H	E	A	T
■	■	■	S	H	E	■	A	M	I	■	■	■
A	S	I	T	I	S	■	Y	E	L	L	O	W
L	O	N	E	R	■	■	A	T	O	N	E	■
L	Y	N	X	E	S	■	P	R	O	B	E	D
■	■	■	A	D	O	■	R	A	N	■	■	■
F	E	E	S	■	U	S	E	■	H	E	M	P
L	A	P	■	A	R	M	S	■	E	D	I	E
I	C	E	■	S	C	O	T	■	A	G	R	A
T	H	E	■	S	E	G	O	■	D	E	E	R

Saturday's answer 1-21



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Izabella Miko, 27; Emma Bunton, 32; Geena Davis, 52; Robby Benson, 52

Happy Birthday: This can turn out to be an interesting year if you concentrate on some of your inventions or ideas. Get involved in self-improvement projects and you will get results. A change is apparent at a personal or professional level. Both will contribute to an attitude improvement. Your numbers are 7, 16, 20, 24, 27, 39

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): You will pick up valuable information from someone who has experienced more life lessons. Travel will put you in a position to make a move in the future or to source out the job opportunities elsewhere. Don't get bogged down by emotional issues. ✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Have no fear—try new things and you will benefit through experimentation. An opportunity to deal with someone from a different background will open your mind to far-reaching ideas that can turn into a lucrative endeavor. Someone you least expect will encourage and help you. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): You should be brainstorming and trying to get ahead. Focus on your goals and you won't be disappointed but, let jealousy or emotional matters intervene and you will miss out. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Your emotions will play havoc with you if you don't give in to change. Look beyond your immediate situation and see the potential. It's time to be a bit of an adventurer. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): If it's excitement you are looking for, you should be able to find it. Love is in the stars and the opportunity to interact with all sorts of people from different walks of life will be stimulating. Don't hold back. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Don't let anyone force his or her will on you. You are in the driver's seat, so be firm and formulate your own ideas so you are happy with the outcome and secure with what is heading your way. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Avoid an altercation with anyone competitive. You cannot let your personal thoughts interfere with your productivity. Focus on what you are doing and ignore what's going on around you. ✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Taking something you already have or are working on and increasing its value or even making a residential move should help you turn your financial situation around. Change is required and the longer you sit idle, the further away you will become from resolving your problems. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Answers will be made available but you have to question where they are coming from. A change in the way you do things will confuse anyone trying to undermine you. Stay ahead of the game by being one step in front of the competition. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Money is heading in your direction from a most unusual source. Broaden your horizons and look at the possibility of getting involved in a money-making venture. Follow your intuition and it will lead to a good decision. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): You can bet that if you ask for something, the person on the giving end will expect something big in return. Be careful with whom you do business. You are better off pursuing on your own. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Take charge and do things according to your plans. You will attract the help of someone who has just what you need to complete your goal. Be careful not to give away too much. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are a thinker, a doer and an entrepreneur. You are sensitive and always trying to lend a helping hand. You are adaptable and have no fear of stepping in and taking over.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

COPYRIGHT 2007 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

2		5	1			6		8
				6	4			
1	8				7		4	9
	9	2						3
	1		5	3	8		9	
4						1	6	
7	6		9				2	1
			3	7				
8		1			2	9		7

Difficulty Level ★ 1/21

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

1	7	8	2	3	5	9	6	4
9	5	2	7	6	4	1	8	3
3	4	6	8	9	1	7	5	2
7	6	4	1	2	9	5	3	8
5	3	9	6	4	8	2	7	1
8	2	1	3	5	7	4	9	6
4	8	7	5	1	6	3	2	9
2	1	5	9	8	3	6	4	7
6	9	3	4	7	2	8	1	5

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/19

©2007 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

SANDPAPER **Solution: 9 letters**

L	S	E	T	S	P	G	E	A	Y	(G)	E	C	S	R
D	A	Z	E	M	N	S	Y	R	D	(R)	O	T	E	W
E	W	I	N	O	L	E	E	F	U	(I)	E	Y	A	F
D	D	S	R	O	U	G	H	S	L	(T)	A	M	L	T
D	U	T	A	T	S	D	S	D	R	L	X	I	E	H
E	S	T	G	H	S	E	M	N	S	R	N	E	K	S
B	T	L	A	S	R	U	E	A	E	T	H	C	T	U
M	U	R	O	P	C	M	D	B	P	S	E	U	W	R
E	P	L	T	O	O	R	I	N	A	D	C	E	A	C
C	S	A	T	H	T	F	U	R	I	G	O	R	L	S
H	N	T	R	A	G	S	M	B	N	I	N	O	L	E
I	O	E	A	D	N	I	R	G	T	C	T	L	W	L
N	Y	M	N	O	L	A	E	R	E	M	O	V	E	A
A	A	S	T	I	C	K	E	W	S	R	U	B	S	C
G	R	A	D	E	F	E	V	I	S	A	R	B	A	S

© 2008 Universal Press Syndicate www.wonderword.com 1/21

Abrasive, Bands, Carbide, China, Coats, Coil, Contour, Cotton, Crush, Cuts, Deck, Edges, Embedded, Emery, Feel, Fiber, Fine, Flint, Garnet, Glue, Grade, Grind, Grit, Home, Industrial, Layer, Medium, Metal, Paint, Pressure, Rags, Rayon, Remove, Rigor, Rolls, Rough, Rubs, Sawdust, Scales, Scrub, Seal, Sharp, Sheet, Size, Smooth, Steel, Stick, Strong, Texture, Tools, Wall, Weight, Wet-Or-Dry, Wood

Last Saturday's Answer: Accordion

To order THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volume 15, 22, 23, 24, 25 or 26, send $5.95 each (US funds only) payable to Universal Press Syndicate plus $3 postage for the first book order, $1 p&h for each additional book. Send to WONDERWORD, 4520 Main St., Kansas City, Mo. 64111 or call toll-free, 1-800-255-5734, ext. 6688. Order online at upuzzles.com. (Contain 43 puzzles, 9 of which are the larger, 20 x 29 size)

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR RENT RESIDENTIAL

Apartment room for rent: Fully furnished 1 brm, T/B, 24-hr water $210/month, near Conwood | Tel. 287-1372, 235-6748

Apartment Room for Rent
2 bed room $230.00, Koblerville.
Contact: 288-0728.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

2 SEWING MACHINE REPAIRER (M 6163)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self housing; self food; provided workmen's compensation & medical expenses. Contact: Yong Jia Corp. @288-3839.

---

1 HOUSEWORKER (M 6164)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Charge by the employer $100.00/housing; charge by the employer $100.00/food & medical benefits. Contact: Mr. & Mrs. Antonio T. Lim &/or Carmen Ong. @234-1629.

---

1 AUTO MECHANIC (M 6165)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Free housing; medical benefits & workmen's compensation. Contact: Transamerica (Saipan) Corporation @234-1629.

---

1 ELECTRICAL ENGINEER (MANAGER) (M 6166)
Salary:$650.00-$1,800.00/monthly. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: JAP Professional Corp. dba GEMS (Guam Electrical Material Supply) @235-5902.

---

4 MASSEUSE/MASSEUR (M 6167)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workmen's compensation provided by employer. Contact: American Global Voice Ltd. @233-8119.

---

1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (M 6168)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation provided. Contact: ILC Corporation dba Ladera Int'l School of Saipan @288-2006.

---

1 COMPUTER TECHNICIAN (M 6169)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Free medical expenses & free medical insurance. Contact: Multi Business Corporation dba Video Haus, Accounting Service, VH Mini Mart, C3 Wholesale Seafoods @233-5397.

---

1 PACKER (M 6170)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation shall be provided by the employer. Contact: Century Corporation @285-6160.

---

1 MANAGER (M 6171)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation shall be provided by the employer. Contact: Century Corporation @285-6160.

---

1 HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR (M 6172)
Salary:$3.85/hour. Benefits: Self arranges housing; self provided food; medical & worksmen compensation provided by ER. Contact: Marianas Repairs Co., Inc. @234-9083.

---

1 CASHIER (M 6173)
Salary:$3.55-$4.00/hour. Benefits: Workman's compensation & medical provided. Contact: AFH, Inc. @234-6269.

---

1 HOUSEWORKER (M 6174)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Live out housing; 1 meal free & medical. Contact: Josephine C. Balicanta @234-0740.

---

1 SALES MANAGER (M 6175)
Salary:$3.55-$4.05/hour. Benefits: Medical benefits & workers compensation. Contact: RK CNMI Inc. @233-0569.

---

3 MASSEUSE/MASSEUR (M 6176)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Medical benefits & workers compensation. Contact: Sterling Corporation @233-7766.

---

1 ASST. MANAGER (M 6177)
Salary:$3.75/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical & worksman compensation. Contact: Halal Corp. CNMI dba Marianas Telecom @233-9457.

Make it a **daily** habit!
Log on to www.saipantribune.com

NEW **Rattan Furniture**
FOR SALE
Expensive material
Call 235-4791, 433-9616, 285-7446

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP 08-008

Real Property Appraisal

Northern Marianas College is soliciting sealed proposals for appraisal of Real Property belonging to the NMC.

Specifications and Scope of Work may be picked up at the NMC Procurement Office, bldg. N Room 4, Monday to Friday between the hours of 8: 30-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-4:30 p.m. For Off-island Proposers, you may request a copy via fax or e-mail.

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The NMC reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals for any reason and waive any defect in said proposals, or cancel in part or its entirety this RFP, if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College.

All costs incurred by the proposer to prepare a response this solicitation and subsequent inquiries shall be borne by the proposer.

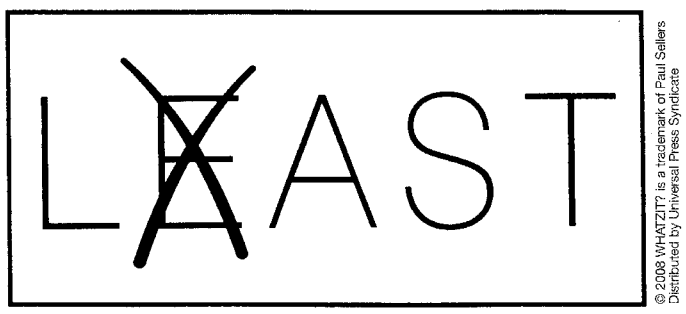
Proposals deadline are due January 25, 2008 on at 10:00 a.m. Saipan time at the Northern Marianas College, Procurement Office, P.O. Box 501250, Saipan, MP 96950.

All submittals shall become the property of NMC and shall not be returned.

Duane R.T. Sablan
Procurement & Property Management Office

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.



Find today's solution in this section

WHATZIT Solution:
Last but not least

Subscribe to CNMI's First Daily Newspaper

235-NEWS

FOR RENT

Well maintained office space and apartment units in a secure and quiet environment. Conveniently located on Middle Road Gualo Rai, just 3 minutes drive to shopping, entertainment and business establishments in Garapan.

We have the following office space and apartments for rent:
- 1 Office Space, Ground Floor. 1440 sq. ft., 1 bathroom
- 1 2-Bedroom Apartment, 2nd floor, 960 sq. ft., 1 bathroom
- 1 2-Bedroom Apartment, 2nd floor, 744 sq. ft., 1 bathroom, Ocean View
- 1 2-Bedroom Apartment, 3rd floor, 970 sq. ft., 1 bathroom

24 Hour Water Supply • Back-up Generator • On-Call Maintenance Staff • Laundry Room • Swimming Pool

For Inquiry, call us at 235-7688

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$25
• 5-Liner	$35
• 3-Liner with picture	$45
• 5-Liner with picture	$55

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

As added service to our valued customers, you may now submit all your JVA placements for announcement/publication in *Saipan Tribune's* print and online edition and KZMI/KCNM at the same time. No more worries of having to go to two different locations every time you need to place job vacancy announcements. Special rates are available for JVA customers under this arrangement.

Print*	
• 1st position	$10
• 2nd position	$3
• Succeeding positions	$1
Combo (Print and Online)*	
• 1st position	$13
• 2nd position	$4
• Succeeding positions	$2
Radio (KCNM/KZMI)	
• Up to 6 positions	$5
• More than 6 positions	$10

LOWER RATES! Effective Feb. 3, 2007

*These rates apply to all vacancy announcements that include corresponding benefits and which announcements are all under the same company name.

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Job Vacancy Announcements

Monday Through Friday Issues: All ads placed before 12 noon will come out the next publication date.

Saturday And Sunday Issues:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.
- KCNM/KZMI: All ads placed on Friday (9am to 5pm) will be for Monday's radio announcement.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

Job Vacancy Announcements

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

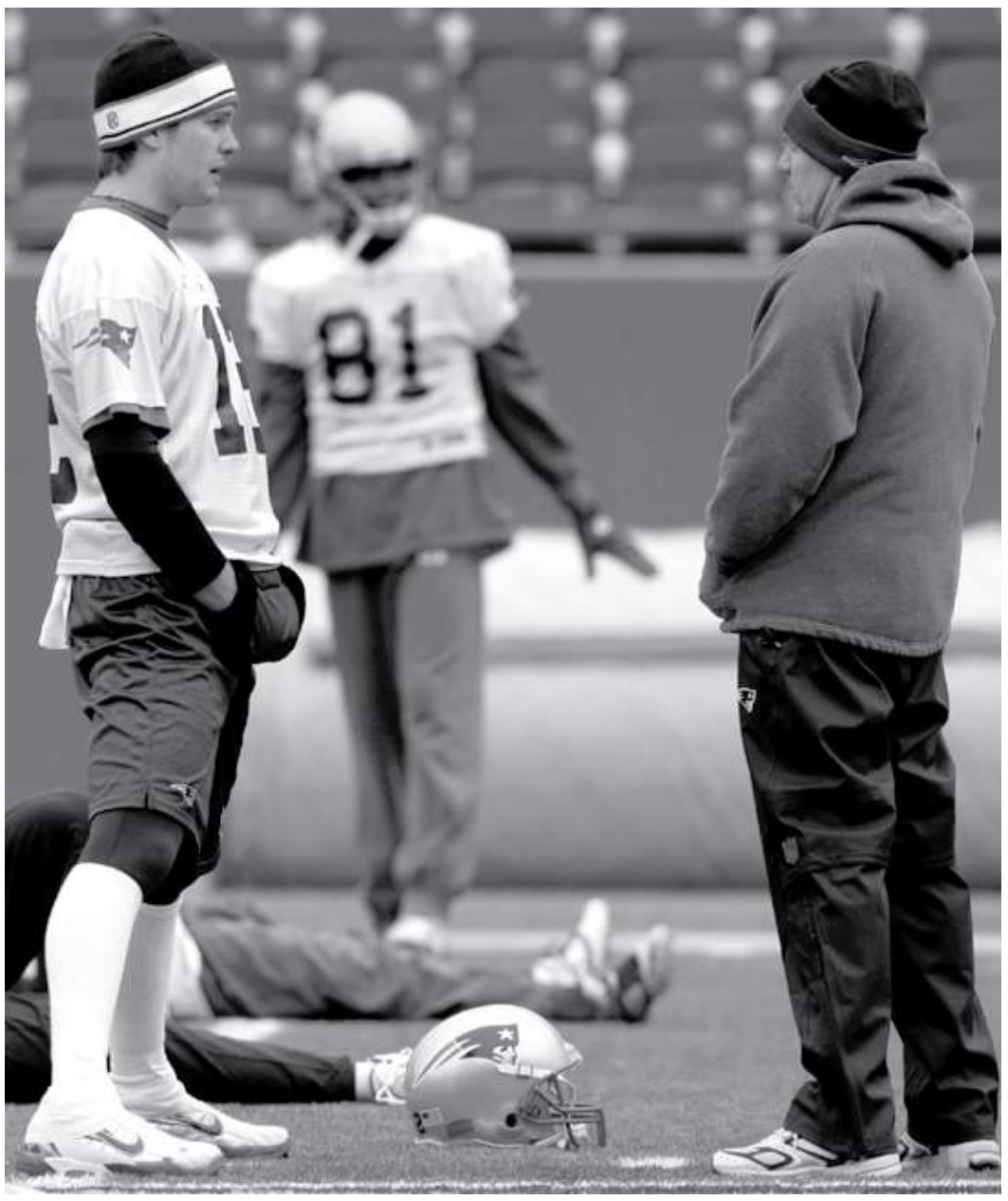
CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

Unbeaten Pats looking for better defense



AP

New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady, left, and headcoach Bill Belichick, right, talk while the team stretches during football practice at Gillette Stadium, in Foxborough, Mass., Thursday afternoon, Jan. 17, 2008.

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP)—The Patriots are renowned for throwing new defensive twists at opponents. Here's one they'd like to show on Sunday: stopping long drives and getting the ball back into Tom Brady's hands faster.

After two of their weaker defensive games of the season, unbeaten New England is determined to improve against the San Diego Chargers in the AFC championship game.

In their 38-35 win in their regular-season finale, the Patriots defense allowed four touchdown passes by Eli Manning of the New York Giants. In last Saturday night's 31-20 playoff win, it controlled Jacksonville's strong running game but allowed four scoring drives of at least nine plays.

"I thought we played a run pretty well, but when you don't get off the field on third down, that's all negated," linebacker Mike Vrabel said Friday. "For us, it comes down to third down."

The Giants converted 6 of 10 third-down plays, while the Jaguars went 4-for-10. In the Patriots' other 15 games, opponents converted more than 40 percent of their third-down opportunities only twice.

"Certainly, if they have the ball for 12 or 14 plays, two things are happening," Vrabel said. "One, Tom Brady doesn't have the ball, and two, they have a chance to score."

What's changed since the first half of the season when the Patriots gave up more than 300 yards just twice?

Teams saw what worked for previous Patriots opponents and tried to copy that. And Rosevelt Colvin, part of an outstanding, rotating five-man linebacker group, was lost for the season with a foot injury after the 11th game.

That meant the remaining quartet of 38-year-old Junior Seau, 34-year-old Tedy Bruschi, 32-year-old Vrabel and 30-year-old Adalius Thomas had to take more snaps.

"Everybody had their roles, and when you lose a cog, you have to adjust," Bruschi said. "And, of course, Rosey was making big plays for us—the sacks, the interceptions, the forced fumbles—and you minus that from an equation, of course other guys are going to have to do different things."

Bruschi conceded that he doesn't recover as fast physically as when he was younger.

"Come Friday, Saturday, you start to feel good again and get ready to do it on Sunday," he said.

The Patriots should get a big break against the Chargers—three, actually.

Quarterback Philip Rivers and running back LaDainian Tomlinson have knee injuries and tight end Antonio Gates is slowed by a toe injury. All may play even if not at full strength.

But Bruschi praised Tomlinson's backups, Michael Turner and Darren Sproles.

"Each one of those running backs brings a formidable threat that we have to stop," he said.

The Chargers listed Rivers as doubtful. Coach Norv Turner said a decision would be made at game time on his status. Even if he plays, his reduced mobility would make him an easier target.

The Patriots sacked Jacksonville's David Garrard once, but pressured him many other times.

It was a different story against Manning.

"I will say that the Giants game, I don't think that the front four, we didn't rush how we needed to rush," Vrabel said.

As they do in every game, they'll probably do some things Sunday that the opponent has never seen from them.

"We don't do things just for the sake of doing them. We try to do things that really are pertinent to what we are trying to stop," Vrabel said. "We don't wait till halftime (to adjust). We try to come over on the sidelines and say, `This is working and this isn't working.'"

Vrabel tied for sixth in the NFL with a career-high 12 1/2 sacks. Bruschi led the Patriots in tackles. Seau had a career-high three interceptions. And Thomas was second on the team with 6 1/2 sacks and returned a touchdown 65 yards for a touchdown.

So there's still plenty of skill left in the "'backerhood," as Bruschi calls them.

And plenty of motivation.

"One thing you learn as you get older and experience season after season after season," Bruschi said, "is that the bigger the games get, the better feeling when you win them because you don't know if you'll be back."

Leonard poised for 2nd Hope Classic win

PALM DESERT, Calif. (AP)—Justin Leonard moved into position for his second Bob Hope Chrysler Classic victory, shooting a 6-under 66 on Saturday to open a gaping four-shot lead in the 90-hole event.

His game steady throughout the first four days, the 2005 champion had a 23-under 265 total through 72 holes.

Anthony Kim (66), Kenny Perry (66), D.J. Trahan (70) and Robert Gamez (71) were tied for second at 19 under.

The first four rounds of the Hope are a pro-am played over four different courses. The low-scoring 70 pros and ties play the final round at the Classic Club.

Former British Open champion Leonard began the fourth round in a second-place tie with Trahan, one shot back of Gamez. Leonard moved in front when he rolled in a 5-foot birdie putt on No. 13 to reach 20 under.

He hit a 4-wood within 6 feet on the 561-yard par-5 14th and made that putt to widen his lead to three shots. He capped his day at the Classic Club with a 1-foot birdie putt on No. 18.

Gamez also played at the Classic Club. Kim was at La Quinta Country Club, and Trahan and Perry at PGA West.

Leonard took the Hope title in 2005 with a closing 67 to finish at 25-under 335, good for a three-shot victory over Tim Clark and Joe Ogilvie.

While this year's tournament is missing the top 23 players in the world rankings, Leonard's name at the top of the leaderboard provides some star power. He has won 11 times on the tour, including the 1997 British Open.

The 35-year-old former University of Texas standout won the Texas Open last year for his most recent victory. He's coming off a tie for eighth in the season-opening Mercedes-Benz Championship.

Temperatures set to drop on Pack, Giants

GREEN BAY, Wis. (AP)—Baby, it's cold outside. So cold, one team has practiced with footballs straight out of the freezer. But not so frigid that many players say they will go sleeveless.

As for the plummeting temperatures being an advantage for the Green Bay Packers in Sunday's NFC championship game against the New York Giants, the hosts aren't quite so sure.

"It's not like they're coming from Florida," guard Daryn Colledge noted.

Of course, Colledge is from Alaska, so zero degrees might be balmy to him.

Forecasts are calling for thermometer readings around 3 degrees for the 5:30 p.m. CST kickoff; yep, a night game in January on the Green Bay tundra. If the wind kicks up, temperatures certainly will dive below zero, and head toward the NFL records.

The coldest game in NFL history was not the 1967 NFL title game at Lambeau Field when the Packers beat Dallas 21-17 in the Ice Bowl. It was minus 13 that day and the wind chill factor was estimated at minus 48.

But in the 1981 AFC championship game, while the temperature was minus-9, the wind chill plunged to minus-59 at Cincinnati as the Bengals beat San Diego 27-7.

BRRRRRR!!!!!

"You know in football we all like to think of ourselves as tough guys," Packers cornerback Charles Woodson said. "So no matter what the weather is, I think most guys will probably go out there no sleeves and play it just like it was 80 degrees."

Even if it's 80 degrees colder.

Brett Favre, who had little trouble in last week's divisional-round win over Seattle played amid snowflakes the size of golf balls, is 43-5 when the temperature in Green Bay is 34 or lower. He will make his 275th consecutive start Sunday in conditions suited for, well, staying inside. The NFL's career leader in most passing categories would take 34—or even 24—degrees for the final step to the Super Bowl.

And, no, Favre is not a big fan of icicles hanging from face masks.

"First of all, I don't know if I have ever gotten used to it," said the Mississippi native who last took the Pack to the Super Bowl 10 years ago. "It is for three hours during the week. We practice indoors—not a whole lot different than anyone else. Yeah, you live in it. I'm not out making snowmen."

Packers coach Mike McCarthy recalled how poorly his team played on Dec. 23 in a 35-7 loss at Chicago, a game that even Favre admitted he was cold throughout. So McCarthy used some frozen balls at practice this week to help simulate likely conditions Sunday.

"Is that what was going on?" veteran wide receiver Donald Driver said with a laugh. "Basically, they never told us that the balls were coming out of the freezer, we just kind just felt it as we caught it: 'Wow, the balls are cold.' We thought most likely the balls had been outside all day, but they were in the freezer.

"Mostly, I think it's for concentration because when it's warm weather you basically don't have to concentrate too much on the ball. If you've got good hands, you're going to catch. But I don't care how good your hands is, in cold weather you have to focus on the ball and make sure you catch it before you run with it.

"You know you can't control the conditions, you can't control the weather, so you've just got to go out there and play regardless of the situation. So I think we've just been successful in it because we live here and we play and we wake up in the morning every day in it. But you still have to go out there and play."

The Giants (12-6) will show up and play, and likely play well considering they've won nine straight road games, including two in the playoffs. Both of those, of course, were in Tampa and Dallas, where anything below freezing is cause for panic.

Star defensive end Michael Strahan promises there won't be panic even if it is the coldest day any of the Giants have encountered.

"This is going to be a game of will, a game of whoever wants it the most," Strahan said. "That is what the playoffs are all about, so this is going to be a very interesting battle. Us, a team that has a strong will and plays well on the road, and that team that has a strong will and plays well at home."

The Packers (14-3) are 8-1 at home. None of those games was played in anything close to the bitter cold they will face Sunday, not even last weekend's snowfest.

One of the team's corporate partners, Mills Fleet Farm, is donating 30,000 hand warmers for fans entering the game. Dr. Don Hartig of the Bellin Health Family Medical Center in Howard advised spectators to dress appropriately, wearing loose, dry layers, a hat, mittens instead of gloves, and waterproof insulated boots.

So don't go sleeveless? When told fellow end Justin Tuck was planning the same fashion statement as many of the Packers, the veteran Strahan shivered.

"I told him I'm wearing layers," Strahan said. "These guys can wear short sleeves. I'm not trying to impress anybody. For what? Oh, I'm strong!

"I guarantee you Justin Tuck's goose bumps will be bigger than his muscles."

Henin, Sharapova win easy

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Justine Henin and Maria Sharapova set up a quarterfinal showdown at the Australian Open, making quick work of overmatched opponents Sunday in sharp contrast to the long overnight session at Melbourne Park.

The top-ranked Henin beat Hsieh Su-wei, the first Taiwanese player through to the fourth round of a Grand Slam event, 6-2, 6-2 in 74 minutes Sunday to extend her winning streak to 32 matches.

"I never guess, I never choose," Henin said of her prospective quarterfinal. "I always know to beat her I have to be at my best. She's a real fighter.

"She never gives up. She's a champion. So I know that against her I will have to be 100 percent all the time."

Sharapova routed No. 11 Elena Dementieva 6-2, 6-0 in 62 minutes.

AP

Maria Sharapova of Russia returns the ball to her compatriot Elena Dementieva in their fourth round women's singles match at the Australian Open tennis championships in Melbourne, Australia, Sunday, Jan. 20, 2008.

The fifth-ranked Sharapova was expected to have a tough time against Dementieva, but broke her fellow Russian's serve six of seven times, including at love to finish off.

"I have always had really tough games against her and I wanted to make sure I kept my focus all the way through," Sharapova said.

Their fast work followed the drama Saturday that started with a rare five-setter for Roger Federer and carried on until Lleyton Hewitt finished off Marcos Baghdatis not long before dawn Sunday.

Day 6 at the Australian Open was a long, long journey. About one-third of the 15,000 people with tickets for the Saturday night session didn't leave until Hewitt smacked a forehand past Marcos Baghdatis at 4:33 a.m. Sunday.

Federer needed 4 hours, 27 minutes to beat 49th-ranked Janko Tipsarevic 6-7 (5), 7-6 (1), 5-7, 6-1, 10-8 in an extended afternoon match that pushed back the night session at least two hours.

Federer had won 30 straight sets at Melbourne Park since dropping the first in the 2006 final against Baghdatis. The Swiss star had lost only six games in his first two matches this year.

"It's not such a relief - it's more happiness," Federer told the crowd at Rod Laver Arena, where he has won the last two Australian titles and three overall. "I'm happy I could deliver a five-set thriller. It was good to be part of something like this."

David Nalbandian and Juan Carlos Ferrero stepped back on the same court to begin the Sunday schedule little more than 6 hours after Hewitt and Baghdatis walked off.

Former No. 1 Ferrero beat 10th-seeded Nalbandian 6-1, 6-2, 6-3 in a third-round match postponed by rain Saturday. In another third-rounder, No. 5 David Ferrer beat American Vincent Spadea 6-3, 6-3, 6-2. Ferrero will play Ferrer in the fourth round.

No. 24 Jarkko Nieminen beat Philipp Kohlschreiber 3-6, 7-6 (7), 7-6 (9), 6-3 and Jo-Wilfried Tsonga edged No. 8 and fellow Frenchman Richard Gasquet 6-2, 6-7 (5), 7-6 (6), 6-3.

In women's third-round matches carried over from Saturday: No. 9 Daniela Hantuchova beat Virginia Ruano Pascual 6-2, 6-3, No. 14 Nadia Petrova defeated Ekaterina Makarova 6-1, 7-6 (8), and Marta Domachowska overcame China's Li Na 2-6, 6-2, 6-4.

Wedged between the epic five-setters Saturday, Venus Williams finished off Sania Mirza in straight sets after declining an invitation to either postpone that match or move to Vodafone Arena, the other stadium with a roof at Melbourne Park.

So when Hewitt tossed the ball up for his first serve it was 11:47 p.m. - the latest start for a singles match in the Australian Open. He broke Baghdatis on his fifth match point 4:45 later to win 4-6, 7-5, 7-5, 6-7 (4), 6-3.

"Obviously, an incredible day of tennis," Hewitt said, sounding hoarse and tired. "I mean, for Roger Federer to go five sets—how often does that happen?"

Hewitt jokes that his 2-year-old daughter, Mia, would be awake and ready to play when he got back to his apartment.

Hewitt will play No. 3 Novak Djokovic, who ousted Sam Querrey 6-3, 6-1, 6-3 to leave James Blake as the best U.S. hope at the Open.

Blake rallied from two sets down and then a double-break in the fourth to beat Frenchman Sebastien Grosjean 4-6, 2-6, 6-0, 7-6 (5), 6-2.

Next for him is 6-foot-5 Marin Cilic, a 6-2, 6-7 (4), 6-3, 6-1 winner over last year's losing finalist, Fernando Gonzalez.

In fourth-round matches Sunday, No. 2 Nadal faced Paul-Henri Mathieu and No. 4 Nikolay Davydenko played No. 14 Mikhail Youzhny met in a match between Russians.

Two of the Russia's top women lost Saturday. No. 2 Svetlana Kuznetsova fell 6-3, 6-4 to 18-year-old Agnieszka Radwanska of Poland and No. 6 Anna Chakvetadze was beaten 6-7 (6), 6-1, 6-2 by No. 27 Maria Kirilenko.

No. 4 Ana Ivanovic advanced 6-3, 6-4 victory over No. 28 Katarina Srebotnik and No. 8 Venus Williams recovered an early break to beat Mirza of India 7-6 (0), 6-4.

Her sister, defending Australian Open champion Serena Williams, took on Nicole Vaidisova on Sunday in a rematch of last year's semifinals.

Federer said his five-setter would give him a good idea of where he stands as he bids to make an 11th consecutive Grand Slam final. A title would move him within one of Pete Sampras' record 14 majors.

"I don't have them often," said Federer, who needed every one of his personal best 39 aces to fend off Tipsaravic.

In 35 majors, Federer is 9-4 in matches that have gone five sets and his last at Melbourne—a semifinal defeat to Marat Safin in 2005—broke up his titles in '04, '06 and '07.

Hewitt wasted a match point in the eighth game of the fourth set and ensured he'd pass the record for the latest finishing match at a major when he held for a 6-5 lead at 3:34 a.m.—the same time Italy's Andreas Seppi finished off Bobby Reynolds in a 6-1, 6-7 (4), 6-7 (5), 7-6 (3), 6-3 match in the first round in Australia last year.

He broke Baghdatis twice in the fifth, the second after the Cypriot saved triple match point and was laughing almost deliriously with each.

Hewitt ranked the win among his best in a career that includes U.S. Open and Wimbledon titles.

"Tonight is definitely up there," he said. "He hasn't had an easy draw to get through at all. He's a tough guy to finish off."

Knicks rally to beat stone-cold Heat, who lose 13th straight

MIAMI (AP)—The New York Knicks happily exploited another fourth-quarter collapse by the Miami Heat, who sent coach Pat Riley to a new low in the NBA on Saturday.

Jamal Crawford scored 22 points and Nate Robinson added 19, including the jumpshot with 2:20 left that put New York ahead to stay, and the Knicks beat Miami 88-84—sending the Heat to their 13th straight loss, the longest in the league and the worst run of Riley's career.

Miami led by 10 late in the third quarter and took a four-point lead into the fourth, but lost yet again to match the second-longest skid in team history.

Only the expansion Heat—who lost their first 17 games of the 1988-89 season—have dropped more in a row than this team, which has free-fallen since winning the championship a mere 19 months ago.

Struggling New York has won four of its last five.

AP

New York Knicks guard Nate Robinson (4) passes the ball as Miami Heat forward Dorell Wright, right, defends in the first quarter during a basketball game in Miami, Saturday, Jan. 19, 2008.

Rockets 83, Spurs 81

In Houston, defending champion San Antonio fell to its fourth defeat in six games with a loss to Texas rival Houston.

Yao Ming had 21 points and 14 rebounds for the Rockets, who beat the Spurs for only the fourth time in the last 13 meetings.

Mavericks 111, SuperSonics 96

In Dallas, the home side sent reeling Seattle to its 10th straight loss.

Dirk Nowitzki scored 20 points and Devin Harris keyed a game-breaking run for the Mavericks, who have won eight of the past nine.

Seattle's 10 losses in a row matches the single-season franchise record. The Sonics last dropped 10 in a row in 1968.

Bulls 97, Pistons 81

In Chicago, the home side used a strong fourth-quarter defensive effort to stay perfect this season against Detroit.

Ben Gordon scored 33 points for the Bulls, who outscored the Pistons 26-14 in the final period, improving to 3-0 this season against the team that eliminated them in the Eastern Conference semifinals last spring.

Nuggets 111, Timberwolves 108

In Denver, Allen Iverson scored 35 points, including a fade-away jumper and two free throws in the final 30 seconds, as Denver held off Minnesota.

Carmelo Anthony added 26 for the Nuggets.

The Timberwolves fell to 1-20 on the road this season and have lost 16 straight.

Kings 110, Pacers 104

In Indianapolis, Ron Artest scored 15 points against his former team to lead Sacramento to a win over Indiana.

Artest still is disliked by Indiana fans for his role in the brawl between Pacers players and Detroit fans in 2004. He was booed often, but got his first win against the Pacers since he requested a trade two seasons ago.

Magic 101, Trail Blazers 94

In Orlando, Florida, Hedo Turkoglu scored 20 points to help Orlando hold on for victory against Portland.

Rashard Lewis added 16 for the Magic.

The Magic, who blew a 19-point third-quarter lead in their previous game, led by 21 in the middle of the second quarter, but saw the advantage dwindle to just four late in the third period before steadying.

Warriors 119, Bucks 99

In Milwaukee, Al Harrington scored 27 points and Golden State beat Milwaukee.

Andris Biedrins added 20 for the Warriors, who broke open the game in the third and have now won five of six.

Milwaukee has lost four of five.

Bobcats 105, Grizzlies 87

In Charlotte, North Carolina, Jason Richardson scored a season-high 38 points and had 14 rebounds to lead Charlotte to victory over Memphis.

The Bobcats beat the Grizzlies for the first time in team history.

Memphis has lost six of its past seven games and four straight on the road.

76ers 99, Raptors 95

In Philadelphia, Willie Green tied a season high with 23 points in Philadelphia's win over Toronto.

Andre Miller and Andre Iguodala each added 20 as the Sixers won for just the second time in 10 games.

Clippers 120, Nets 107, OT

In Los Angeles, Corey Maggette scored 31 points as Los Angeles edged New Jersey in overtime.

Rookie Al Thornton added 15 of his 22 in the fourth quarter and overtime as the Clippers beat the Nets at home for the fourth straight time.

The Nets have lost five of six following a season-best five-game winning streak.

PBA promotes Barrios to commissioner

MANILA, Philippines—Faced with another deadlock, the Philippine Basketball Association's board of governors on Thursday decided to promote Renauld "Sonny" Barrios from officer-in-charge to commissioner for the rest of the league's 33rd season.

The decision to elevate Barrios came after the board failed to come up with the required six votes to break the deadlock between commissioner aspirants lawyer Chito Salud and self-made telecommunications executive Lambert Ramos.

At the same time, the board decided to speed up the process of turning the league into a corporation and to fill up various positions in the organization in July.

Barrios, the 60-year-old former deputy commissioner for 18 years who was plucked from retirement to serve as OIC at the start of the season, thus became the seventh top honcho of Asia's first play-for-pay league, replacing the resigned Noli Eala.

Tapped by the PBA board for his expertise and because he had no ambitions of being commissioner, Barrios was originally tasked to run the league until a new commissioner was named.

A graduate of Ateneo de Manila University, Barrios thus joined the likes of founding commissioner Leo Prieto, lawyer Rudy Salud, the late Mariano Yenko, Rey Marquez, the late Jun Bernardino and Eala.

In the latest round of voting, Salud and Ramos reportedly fought to another 5-4 standoff, with neither budging nor wanting to confirm who got the five votes.

Under league rules, six votes is needed to decide who gets the job.

Should the PBA become a corporation, it will be led by a chief executive officer, who will have under his staff a commissioner and other PBA personnel. Under this setup, Ramos and Salud could end up serving the league at the same time.

Meanwhile, Coca-Cola, with Asi Taulava on a mission, clashes with Talk 'N Text for the second time in three nights, looking for a repeat victory that would keep the Tigers in the running as wild-card action begins Friday at the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay City.

"There's a lot of fire in me and I don't think I am going to back down," Taulava said, just minutes after shooting 14 points and grabbing 13 rebounds in a 101-85 victory on Wednesday night.

Game time is 4:50 p.m. with the odds stacked on the Tigers mainly because of Taulava, who was traded to Coca-Cola after 10 years as a Phone Pal.

"We'll do whatever it takes to win (against Talk 'N Text in the wild card), because this win means nothing if we don't beat them again," the 6-foot-10 behemoth said. "Words cannot describe it (win). But I'll tell you how it really feels on Friday."

Defending champion Barangay Ginebra slugs it out with Air21 in the other KO match at 7:20 p.m.

Friday night's winners will clash on Sunday for the right to play No. 3 seed Alaska in the quarterfinals.

JUNIOR

From Page 28

their head-to-head match up.

One of the Sonics' losses to the Junior Nationals was in the Rotary youth basketball league finals last month. They also lost to the Junior Nationals during the Bud Cup elimination, 88-95, last Oct. 5

The Southern crew of coach Jesse Tudela went on to win five straight games after that loss, including a morale-boosting 72-68 victory over powerhouse Suns last Oct. 17 and ended the regular season with a 9-3 slate.

The Ulloa's earned a second round trip to the playoffs after a shocking 104-93 win over top-ranked and pennant winner Ol'Aces on Jan. 14, while the Sonics edged the Junior Nationals, 88-86, on Jan. 16.

In the second game, the Saipan Stevedore Suns aim for some payback when they clash with No. 2 Rock Steady with the loser meeting the Bombers in the 8:30pm game on Wednesday.

The winners of today's playoff match will play against each other on Jan. 28, Monday, at 8:30pm.

The Bud Cup championship game is scheduled on Feb. 1, Friday, and if necessary on Feb. 2, Saturday.

NOBUYUKI

From Page 28

San Jose for the 10K run with personnel from the Department of Public Safety controlling the traffic flow.

Police officers, stationed at different points on the racecourse, assisted the runners and stopped cars or cautioned motorists every time runners passed by any stoplight or intersection.

Patrol cars, with horns and sirens blaring to signal the arrival of the first finisher, also assisted Yamamoto as he entered the final 100 meters toward Micro Beach Road.

Long-time Saipan runner and triathlete Stuart Smith won the 2006 race with a time of 3:09.28. Tanabe broke that record a year later when he breezed through the course in under three hours.

Two other Japanese runners finished second and third behind Yamamoto. Yoshihiro Narui was the runner-up with a time of 3:28.56, while Hideyuki Iwai came third with a time of 3:36.22.

Saipan's Tamio Nishikido was the top local finisher when he placed seventh (3:51.19). He was followed by long-distance runner Ketson "Jack" Kabriel (4:02.07) and 2006 CNMI National Triathlon Team member Butch Sublemente (4:06.33).

Saipan's David Bautista, who also competed last year, was again the youngest competitor at 18 years old, finishing 19th in 5:11.55. His best record was 3:56.08 in 2007.

Other Saipan residents that completed the marathon were Paul Khang (14th, 4:38.40); Sathiyapalan Kalarikkal (15th, 4:43.28); Kenneth Pratt (22nd, 5:25.32); Yoshi Suzuki (23rd, 5:36.09); and Tony Atalig (36th,6:49.45). Guam's Roman Camacho finished 26th overall with a time of 5:58.43.

In the women's event, Oshima let her 10 other opponents eat her dust after completing the run from north to south in 3:51.28.

Though Oshima failed to beat the 3:23.25 set by Miyo Tanabe last year she had some consolation after it took almost two hours before the second woman crossed the finish line.

Japan's Yoshie Matsushita, the youngest female competitor at 25 years old, touched the tape at the finish line at Micro Beach in 5:01. 15. Saipan's Xiang Shan Cui finished third, 5:21.30, while Guam's Barbara Tayama clocked in at 5:25.30.

Saipan's Monica Yamaguchi, who opted not to join the race and decided to cheer on the runners along Beach Road, ruled the inaugural staging of the race when she completed the run in 4:10.19.

The course for the full marathon begins and ends at Micro Beach. Runners headed north towards Middle Road where they went through the villages of Puerto Rico, Tanapag, and San Roque. They turned around in Marpi, north of Marianas Resort and Spa and returned to Beach Road and headed towards South going through the villages of Garapan, San Jose, Susupe, Chalan Kanoa, and San Antonio.

They then turned around at the main entrance of the Pacific Islands Club and headed back at the same route to finish at Micro Beach.

The race is held in cooperation with Marianas Visitors Authority, Northern Marianas Athletics, Northwest Airlines, Excite.com, and Oakley.

WHITEMORE

From Page 28

be held in back-to-back weekend in March.

The 1.5-kilometer swim, 30-km bike, and 12-km run XTERRA Saipan Championship wil be held on March 8. It will treat world class triathletes to a swim in the clear warm waters of the Philippine Sea, a bike on coral roads and single-track, and a run through jungle and caves while passing World War II relics. The race starts and ends at Micro Beach.

The 2-km swim, 60-kim bike, and 15-km run Tagaman, meanwhile, begins at Pacific Islands Club and traverses the entire 15-mile length of the island of Saipan. Aside from the XTERRA Saipan Championship and Tagaman Triathlon, the 2008 Saipan Sportfest will also feature the annual Sophia Walk, an XTERRA bike race, and Taga Kids.

The Swiss duo of Olivier Marceau and Renata Bucher continued their dominance by winning the 6th XTERRA Saipan Championships last March 17.

Marceau and Bucher made it three times in a row, further cementing the two's dominance in conquering the pristine coral-covered blue waters and the technical jungle course of the Global Tour's "Crown Jewel".

Marceau finished the 1.5-kilometer swim, 30-km bike, and 12-km run XTERRA Saipan course in two hours, 27 minutes, and 16 seconds.

Bucher, for her part, also took four minutes off her previous time. She had a time of 2:49:00 in her second XTERRA win in 2006 but bested her record when she crossed the finish line in 2:45:08 on her second time around.

Andrew Noble of Australia and Julie Dibbens of Great Britain, meanwhile, won the longest-running triathlon event on Saipan a week later in March 24. Noble had a time of 2:52:24 while Dibbens recorded 3:04:07 in the Tagaman.

3 REMAIN

From Page 28

is based on the number of sets won. If a tie occurs, then the second tiebreaker is used based on points against.

Menudo scored a three-set 25-13, 26-24, 15-10 win to foil the Beach Jammers' debut in the league organized by the Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association.

Home Boyz won its first game via a three-set sweep of the hard-fighting Ol'Aces, 25-19, 25-23, 15-13, while Islanders bounced back from an opening set loss to hand CH-Hammer its second straight loss, 12-25, 25-14, 15-12.

No Fear, which lost its first game last week, also gave Ma Numel'u its second straight loss, a 25-17, 25-18, 13-15 beating.

On opening day, Menudo defeated CH-Hammer, 25-23, 25-20, 15-9, while Home Boyz downed No Fear, 26-24, 25-22, 9-15, Islanders beat Fanians, 21-25, 25-20, 15-13, while Ol'Aces clipped Ma Numel'u, 20-25, 25-21, 16-14.

Games today will have Home Boyz going for win No. 3 against winless CH-Hammer in the 6pm first game, while Menudo takes on Fanians in the 7pm second game. The Beach Jammers will try to go for its first win against Ol'Aces at 8pm, while Islanders battle Ma Numel'u in the 9pm final match.

Games in the Men's Indoor Winter League are held every Tuesday and Thursday from 6pm to 9pm. The duration of the league will run for nine weeks with the Top 8 teams after the single-elimination round advancing in the playoffs on March 18.

Four games will be played every Tuesday and Thursday where one match would consist of two race-to-25 sets and the third and deciding set is first to make 15.

A separate women's league begins today with five competing teams. The 6pm first game will be between the Beach Jammers ad Pikan Gaga while Seikid clashes with YoYo's in the second game. Ta Chagi is the fifth team and drew a bye.

For more information, call Cramer at 235-6231 at ext. 5148 or e-mail him at seaexec@picsaipan.com or Janice Camacho at 868-9515 or 323-6565 or 66 or 67 or 68 or e-mail her at nonose98@gmail.com.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	32	6	.842	–
Toronto	22	19	.537	11 1/2
New Jersey	18	21	.462	14 1/2
Philadelphia	16	25	.390	17 1/2
New York	13	27	.325	20

Southeast Division

Orlando	25	17	.595	–
Washington	21	17	.553	2
Atlanta	17	19	.472	5
Charlotte	16	24	.400	8
Miami	8	31	.205	15 1/2

Central Division

Detroit	29	12	.707	–
Cleveland	21	18	.538	7
Indiana	18	23	.439	11
Chicago	16	23	.410	12
Milwaukee	16	24	.400	12 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	27	12	.692	–
New Orleans	27	12	.692	–
San Antonio	25	13	.658	1 1/2
Houston	21	19	.525	6 1/2
Memphis	11	29	.275	16 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	24	15	.615	–
Portland	24	16	.600	1/2
Utah	23	18	.561	2
Seattle	9	31	.225	15 1/2
Minnesota	5	34	.128	19

Pacific Division

Phoenix	28	12	.700	–
L.A. Lakers	26	12	.684	1
Golden State	25	17	.595	4
Sacramento	17	22	.436	10 1/2
L.A. Clippers	12	24	.333	14

Yesterday's Games

Sacramento 110, Indiana 104
Orlando 101, Portland 94
Philadelphia 99, Toronto 95
Charlotte 105, Memphis 87
New York 88, Miami 84
Chicago 97, Detroit 81
Houston 83, San Antonio 81
Golden State 119, Milwaukee 99
Denver 111, Minnesota 108
Dallas 111, Seattle 96
L.A. Clippers 120, New Jersey 107, OT

BOB HOPE CHRYSLER CLASSIC SCORES

Fourth Round

Justin Leonard	68-64-67-66	265
Robert Gamez	66-65-67-71	269
D.J. Trahan	67-64-68-70	269
Anthony Kim	69-67-67-66	269
Kenny Perry	66-72-65-66	269
Steve Elkington	66-68-69-67	270
Boo Weekley	69-70-62-69	270
Brett Rumford	67-68-69-67	271
Ben Crane	66-69-69-67	271
Dustin Johnson	67-69-72-63	271
Shane Bertsch	70-71-64-66	271
Nicholas Thompson	68-70-68-66	272
Ryuji Imada	71-68-67-67	273
Scott Verplank	70-65-70-68	273
Ryan Moore	75-64-67-67	273
John Merrick	73-65-67-68	273
Chez Reavie	69-68-67-70	274
Bill Haas	69-68-69-68	274
Matt Jones	70-70-68-66	274
Charley Hoffman	68-72-71-63	274
Robert Allenby	73-69-68-64	274
Charles Warren	74-69-65-67	275
Vaughn Taylor	70-68-68-69	275
Bart Bryant	71-69-68-67	275
Steve Flesch	72-69-69-65	275
Jesper Parnevik	67-74-66-68	275
Tim Petrovic	65-70-68-72	275
Jason Bohn	66-74-66-69	275
John Senden	68-73-66-68	275
Johnson Wagner	67-71-73-65	276
Heath Slocum	69-70-72-65	276
Tom Scherrer	71-70-66-69	276
Stewart Cink	68-71-66-71	276
Mathew Goggin	65-73-69-69	276
Kevin Na	69-69-70-69	277
Steve Marino	72-71-68-66	277
Y.E. Yang	71-70-67-69	277
Brian Davis	72-69-69-67	277
Rod Pampling	71-70-67-69	277
Jeff Maggert	70-71-70-66	277
Charlie Wi	68-68-74-67	277
Brian Gay	71-67-71-68	277
Rich Beem	72-72-68-66	278
Joe Durant	65-73-71-69	278
Frank Lickliter II	72-69-68-69	278
Mike Weir	70-70-68-70	278
Olin Browne	68-68-75-68	279
Michael Allen	69-71-70-69	279
Bubba Watson	70-71-66-72	279
Brad Adamonis	68-70-69-72	279
Jin Park	69-74-66-70	279
Tommy Armour III	70-71-70-68	279
Kyle Thompson	68-67-72-72	279
Justin Bolli	72-71-69-67	279
Kevin Stadler	72-69-68-71	280
Paul Claxton	70-73-68-69	280
Jason Gore	71-72-69-68	280
Chris Stroud	70-71-69-70	280
Kevin Sutherland	70-71-71-68	280
Woody Austin	68-72-73-67	280
Jeff Quinney	66-69-73-72	280
Ryan Armour	70-75-68-67	280
Shaun Micheel	72-71-67-70	280
Ken Duke	67-70-69-74	280
J.J. Henry	71-72-69-69	281
Brett Wetterich	71-71-67-72	281
Lucas Glover	70-71-69-71	281
Chad Campbell	76-68-69-68	281
Mark Brooks	71-70-70-70	281
Paul Goydos	72-70-71-68	281
Michael Letzig	68-75-67-71	281
Joe Ogilvie	71-70-67-73	281
Martin Laird	71-69-71-70	281
Scott McCarron	68-74-70-69	281
Fred Couples	69-73-71-68	281
Patrick Sheehan	73-71-72-65	281

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

Men's Indoor Volleyball Standings

	W	L	PF	PA	SW
Menudo	2	0	131	99	6
Home Boyz	2	0	125	116	5
Islanders	2	0	113	109	4
No Fear	1	1	124	110	3
Ol'Aces	1	1	116	125	2
Fanians	0	1	58	61	1
Beach Jammers	0	1	47	66	0
Ma Numel'u	0	2	110	124	2
CH-Hammer	0	2	103	117	1

PF-Points for
PA-Points allowed
SW-Sets won

Kanto Boiz reap special awards

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Kanto Boiz became $160 richer when they won three of the four special team awards at stake in the recently concluded season of the Philippine Bowling Association-Budweiser Saturday Night League.

The 37th season ended last Jan. 5 and the following Saturday, Jan. 12, saw the start of the 38th edition of one of the CNMI's longest-running bowling league at the Capital Bowling Center in Garapan.

Kanto Boiz failed to barge into the Top 5 in the team standings but got contented in winning the team awards for having high game scratch and with handicap and the high series with handicap.

Champion SBC/J's Restaurant placed second to Kanto Boiz in the high game scratch and with high game with handicap categories to pocket $105 and hike their total earnings to $805. They topped the high series scratch with 3,036 pinfalls.

JON PEREZ
Kanto Boiz member Kitz Barja, right, poses with Saipan Bowling Association president Jerry Tan during last Jan. 13's awards ceremony of the King, Queen, and Prince/Princess of the Lanes and the 37th season of the Philippine Bowling Association-Budweiser Saturday Night Bowling League at the Saipan Grand Hotel's Club V.

Kanto Boiz each won $40 for having the highest game scratch and highest game with handicap with 1,111 and 1,215 pins, then won another $45 after knocking down 3,285 pins for the high series with handicap.

They won an additional $35 for placing second to SBC/J's in the high series scratch with 2,988 pinfalls.

Team No. 1 placed second to Kanto Boiz in the high series with handicap (3,251).

Kanto Boiz wass composed of Raymond Angeles, Kitz Barja, Orly Ebuen, Ferdie Generoso, Allan Hernandez, and Rust Musca.

Robert Talavera won the individual awards in the high series scratch, beating Raul Dumapit by a solitary pin, 719-718. Ron Cal won the women's division title in the same category with a 616 score.

Talavera (204.87) and Cal (175.23) added the men's and women's high average awards, while Cal also won the high game scratch with 225 pinfalls.

Raymond Zapanta (287) and Rusty Musca (285) finished 1-2 in the high game scratch, while they exchanged places in the high game with handicap with the latter knocking down 296 pins against Zapanta's 293. Lynn Santos won the Ladies title with 260.

Santos was the top female bowler in the high series with handicap (677) then added the most improved bowler award after she added a +11.57 pins to her average. Alex Uy won the men's title with a +19.94 average.

She also won the Ladies division high series with handicap with 677, while Raul Dumapit topped the men's class with 745 pinfalls. Roman Borja and Bernard Paraiso ended up tied in second place (731).

PBA gave out a total of $2,470 in cash prizes last Sunday with SBC/J's Restaurant claiming the $800 top purse after compiling a total of 59.5 wins in the 96 games they played the whole season.

No Use, Evenflow win Rocball semis openers

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The team with the best win-and-loss record, No Use, and the season's No. 1 scoring team, Evenflow, won their respective first round matches as the playoffs of the 2007-2008 World Organized Rocball Community League kicked off last Saturday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

No Use's only defeat of the season came at the hands of No Mercy on the last game of the round-robin phase.

Last Saturday, however, saw a No Use team looking for revenge and it did so by juicing-out with an 88-71 win over No Mercy.

No Use now only has to win its second game against No Mercy next Saturday night to advance to the best-of-5 series for this season's championship.

No Use won the first set of their game against No-Mercy, 24-20. No Mercy bounced back in the second set and won it 22-20. At halftime the game score was 44-42 in favor of No Use.

In the third set, No Use got a big boost with five points scored off of two plays that included a 3-point goal and a 2-point ace. No Use went on to win the third set 22-15. At the end of three sets of play, No Mercy was down by nine points and needed to take the fourth set with a 10-point margin to win the game or win the fourth set with less than a 10-point margin to force No-Use into overtime, or okon.

But No Use closed the door shut and took the game with a 22-14 set win in the fourth to move within a game of advancing to the finals.

In the game between Evenflow and the Try-Outs, Try-Outs lost the first three sets 8-22, 21-17, and 21-18. Try-Outs made improvements in every set and when it counted most, they won the fourth set, 21-14 and prevented Evenflow from juicing out to win the game.

In the fourth set, the Try-Outs jumped out to a commanding 9-0 lead and Evenflow got caught stumbling over themselves with a series of shank serves. Evenflow would score a court point and then serve a shank to lose the point in the first four plays of the fourth set.

Try-Outs eventually won the fourth set, 21-14, to force the game into overtime.

But the players of Evenflow are the most experienced overtime players in Rocball. They have played four overtime games and only lost once in that situation. In the first set overtime, Evenflow buckled down to work, served no shanks, and closed out the game with an 11-8 victory.

Next Saturday, Jan, 26, No Use, No Mercy, Evenflow, and Try-Outs will play their second semifinal games. Evenflow and Try-Outs will play at 6:30pm, while No-Use and No Mercy will square off beginning at 8pm.

Mesa to hold youth cage clinic this weekend

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Veteran referee Arnold Mesa will continue to spread the sport of basketball to the island's youth when he holds his second clinic this weekend at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The two-day clinic begins on Saturday from 9am to 12noon with the afternoon training session starting at 1:30pm. The clinic continues on the same time and venue on Sunday.

Last month, Mesa with the help of Price Costco, conducted a basketball youth clinic at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium from Dec. 26 to 28.

The clinic was requested by Southern Sonics coach Jesse Tudela, who asked Mesa to help him train the Junior Sonics.

Close to 40 from Tudela's Sonics basketball program and Mt. Carmel School athletes and coaches participated in the three-day clinic, which covered the basic basketball violations. The clinic also lasted three hours a day.

For more information, call Mesa at 868-6578 or at 287-7322.

Gomez a gamer in 8-ball

Erwin Gomez returned to the winners' circle in the USS Peleliu Club 8-ball tournament last week.

Gomez defeated Rose Phillips before being sent to the loser's bracket by Roman Rodriguez.

Ed Manucdoc had beaten Taylor Watanabe before losing to Rodriguez, who also topped Nolan Cultura.

Cultura came back against Watanabe, Phillips and Manucdoc in the losers' bracket, but couldn't get past Gomez.

Gomez took two games from Rodriguez in their rematch for the first place money.

"The turnout's been low the last couple of weeks," according to Ken Phillips. "Maybe it's because of the new year."

"We're going to go back to 'friendly' matches with a $5 entry fee on Mondays. It will be 8-ball so that people can practice competitively for the new pool league."

The Wednesday 8-ball will still cost $10. Both tournaments are double elimination and start at 8pm. First, second, and third place will earn prize money.

For more information, please contact Rose or Ken Phillips at 233-1984. ***(USSP)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Erwin Gomez, right, poses with Roman Rodriguez after winning the USS Peleliu Club 8-ball tournament last week at the Garapan sports bar and watering hole.

MLK Day Freedom Run today

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The eighth grade class of the Seventh-Day Adventist School is organizing today's 2nd Annual Freedom Run in celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Registration for today's fun run will start at 4:30pm at the Garapan Fishing Base. The registration fee for is $10 and the event begins 30 minutes after.

Participants will run along the Beach Road Pathway from Garapan Fishing Base to Kilili Beach pavilion.

Aside from commemorating the contributions of the great civil rights leader, the fun run is also a fundraising event for the class's trip to New Zealand.

Winners are guaranteed prizes and all finishers will also receive fabulous prizes.

Early registration started last week with the forms available at the SDA Dental Clinic and the SDA School.

Those who would still want to participate can still register today before the race starts.

The 8th grade class is raising funds for its annual class trip. In the past, classes have visited Japan, the Philippines, Bali, Australia, Palau, Hawaii, Thailand, Singapore, and South Korea.

This year, the students hope to visit New Zealand. The students will spend several weeks learning about the geography, history, and culture of New Zealand before traveling to the island nation to learn about and experience the land of the Kiwis firsthand.

The first Freedom Run was held last year on Martin Luther King Jr. Day and the funds raised from that event helped the students at SDA take a class trip to Singapore in March 2007.

For more information about the 2nd Annual Freedom Run, contact Sean Maycock at the Saipan SDA School (234-7326 or 285-3127).

Kanto Boiz reap special awards

Kanto Boiz became $160 richer when they won three of the four special team awards at stake in the recently concluded season of the Philippine Bowling Association-Budweiser Saturday Night League.

27

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Unbeaten Pats looking for better defense

The Patriots are renowned for throwing new defensive twists at opponents. Here's one they'd like to show on Sunday: stopping long drives and getting the ball back into Tom Brady's hands faster.

24

Nobuyuki, Mamiko conquer Saipan marathon

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saturday's third edition of the Saipan Marathon was ruled by a couple of Japanese runners, one however already calls Saipan her adopted home.

No records were broken over the weekend, but Japan's Nobuyuki Yamamoto and Saipan resident Mamiko Oshima overcame the challenge of the 3rd Annual Saipan Marathon that started at Micro Beach at the American Memorial Park.

The two bested 45 other runners that challenged the 26.2-mile course that took participants from AMP to Marpi and from Marpi to San Antonio.

The 27-year-old Yamamoto was the fastest among a bunch of 35 male runners as it only took him three hours, 19 minutes, and 46 seconds to complete the grueling 42-plus-kilometer run.

Though he failed to beat the course record of 2:57.05 set last year by another Japanese, Hisayoshi Tanabe, Yamamoto was still satisfied with his performance when he accepted his winner's trophy and special Oakley sunglasses.

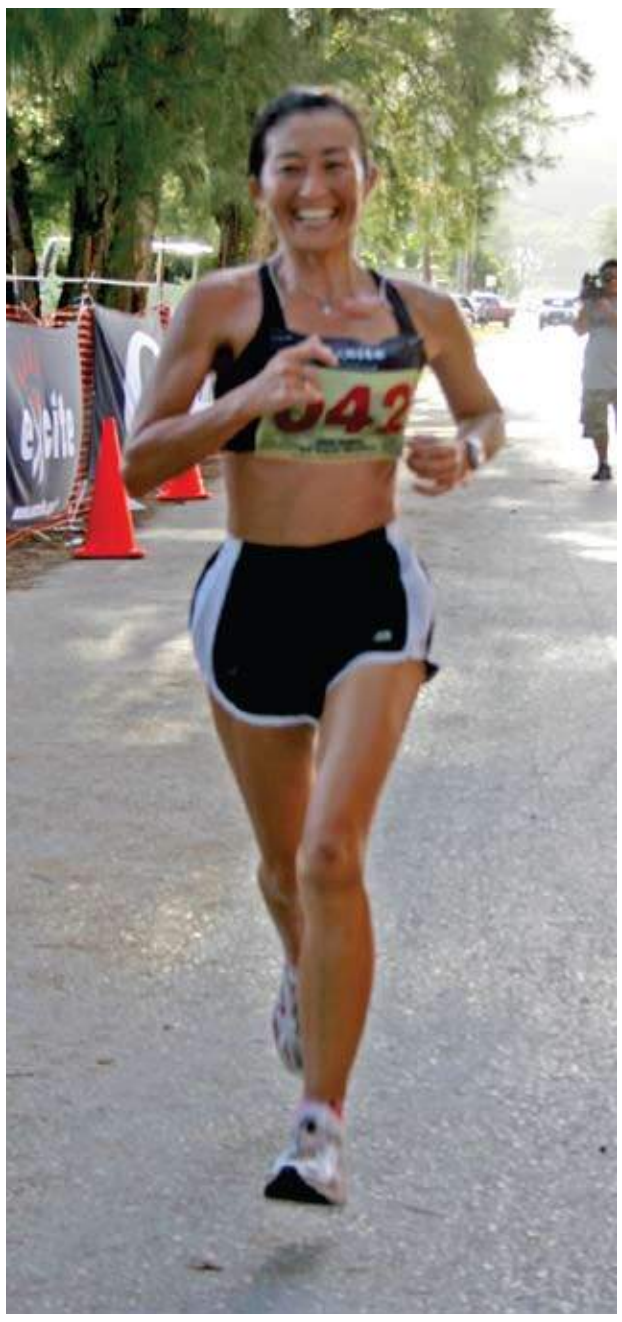
Yamamoto, in a gesture of goodwill, gave away his Oakley sunglasses to 11-year-old Angelo Jones, who topped the 14-and-under division of the 10-kilometer run.

The 26th Half Marathon and 22nd 10K run were held simultaneously with the full marathon.

Foot traffic was visible along Micro Beach Road going to Middle Road up to Marpi for the full marathon and Beach Road from Garapan to San Antonio for the half marathon and from Garapan to

See NOBUYUKI on Page 26

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Nobuyuki Yamamoto of Japan raises his arms in victory after completing the 3rd Annual Saipan Marathon held last Saturday starting at Micro Beach at the American Memorial Park.



JON PEREZ
Saipan's Mamiko Oshima smiles as she crosses the finish line of the 3rd Annual Saipan Marathon held last Saturday starting at Micro Beach at the American Memorial Park.

Whitemore to skip Sportsfest this year

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ
Three-time XTERRA Saipan Championship winner Jamie Whitmore gets ready for the run split of last year's race.

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Three-time XTERRA Saipan Championship winner Jamie Whitmore will not take part in this year's Saipan Sportfest.

It was revealed during last Thursday's 2008 Saipan Sporstfest organizational meeting that the spunky Mt. Aukum, California native has opted to skip this year's 7th Annual XTERRA Saipan Championship and 19th Tagaman Triathlon to concentrate more on upcoming competitions in Australia.

Whitmore, however, has not entirely snubbed the Marianas as the 2007 USA XTERRA National Championship winner will take part in the XTERRA Guam Off-Road Triathlon race that will be held a week prior to Saipan's XTERRA event.

Considered the most accomplished XTERRA athlete of all time, Whitmore has won numerous XTERRA competitions in the U.S. and Europe and was the first three-time winner of the XTERRA Saipan Championship from 2002 to 2003. Renata Bucher duplicated her feat from 2005 to 2007.

Last year, Whitmore topped the 2007 USA XTERRA National Championship to win her fifth crown in the seven-year history of the annual race.

The XTERRA Saipan Championship, considered the "crown jewel" of the XTERRA series, and the 19th Tagaman Triathlon, the longest-running endurance race in the western Pacific, will

See WHITEMORE on Page 26

Junior Nationals-Sonics meeting a possibility

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@hotmail.com
REPORTER

A possible seventh meeting could take place between the CNMI Junior Nationals and the Southern Sonics in the playoff round of the 2007 BANMI-Budweiser Cup Men's Islandwide Basketball League.

But that will have to depend on the outcome of today's match as the Sonics battle the D-1 Ulloa's in the 7pm first game with the loser facing the Nationals on Wednesday. Today's winner will have a weeklong rest and will play in the second game on Jan. 28.

If ever the Sonics loses, it will be their seventh meeting with the CNMI Junior Nationals since the summer of last year. The Sonics hold a 4-2 lead in

See JUNIOR on Page 26

3 remain undefeated in men's volleyball league

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Menudo, Home Boyz, and the Islanders remain undefeated after the second day of action in the Men's Indoor Winter League Thursday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

But by virtue of points scored, points allowed, and number of sets won, Menudo is on top of the standings followed by Home Boyz in second place and the third ranked Islanders.

League rules state the first tiebreaker

See 3 REMAIN on Page 26

Sivas Awes of Home Boyz blocks a shot of an opponent during a game last week in the Men's Indoor Winter Volleyball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

JON PEREZ